













The Bandicout is back, with hotter moves, mind-blawing graphics and cooler vehicles to face his toughest adventure yet. The Wrath of Cortex, It's going to be just like the good old days, only better.



More Pain. More Game.







registration of the West Community of the Section o





This is re piece for substay. This is no place for phy. This is a place where afters want to turn humans into a bad memory. This is a place where strategy matter indoors and out, where your weapens and whiches are both human and after. This is a place for carriage. This is MALD."



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Next Generation Magazine









Holiday Book Roundup





News

If it's news, we know it

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Alphas Find out what you'll be playing next.

⇒ Special

SOUL CALIBUR 2
The original Soul Calibur stunned

gamers everywhere and put
Dreamcast on the map. Can the
sequel repeat the magic?64

Special 32 GAMECUBE LAUNCH!

41 The comprehensive guide to 46 Nintendo's hotly anticipated new 51 machine, as only Next Gen can





Well, after working on 62 of Next Generation's total of 84 issues, I have to do the hardest thing an editor can do, and nat's say goodbye. I art knowing this agazine is in the hands of a very talented and dedicated staff. And needless to say, it was an extremely difficult decision to leave the best damn videogame magazine on the planet. There hasn't been a day in five years I haven't woken up thinking about



■ Throne of Parkness







125	better o
CA	magazin know es eagerly me to g insider i honest r cutting-e the gam The com
	125

ting to be told. As this is my last issue,

I want to play.

ure — the finest ch feature in the ry of the magazine beginning on page 76. To all of you loyal, hardcore readers, thanks for your continuing support. It's been a fiveyear dream.



Finals

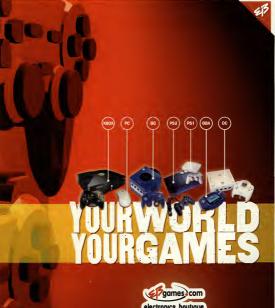
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PARTY TIME

GameCube Goes Hollywood Nintendo kicks off its Cube Club tour in style

Los Angeles, CA —
Celebrities were
mingling, drinks were
flowing, and music was
pumping, but this was definitely
not your average Los Angeles
party — not when videorames

took center stage. Deep in the heart of LA, Nintendo threw an exclusive bash to launch its Cube Club promotion, a traveling nightclub/demo center drumming up excitement for GameCube's November 18 launch. The packed house was of the "don't bother if you're not on the list" variety, and Next Gen was on hand to see if GameCube's silicon would be well received by tinsel town's pitterati. Hey, Isn't That...?
The MTV-cosponsored event had more than its share of pretentious wannabe starlets, but it also attracted celebs who truly wanted to check out Nintendo's new system before it hit stores.

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→ News



Sync's Josy Fatone with NO EVP George Harrison and I GameCube Isn't a toy.

With so many nonhardcore adult gamers on hand, the GameCube premiere party was an eye-opening testing ground for how the general public will take to Nintendo's new image. Rogue Squodron Il impressed attendees who were willing to spend some time mastering the targeting system, but proved a little too complex for those looking to pick up a controller and simply ploy. Games such as Super Smosh Bros, and Wove Roce offered the

accessible for the IOminute spurts that most partygoers seemed willing to spend on a title. Those who obviously were comfortable with a controller in hand, such as justin Berfield (Reese from Molcolm in the Middle), were better prepared to handle the complex control scheme of games ilke NBA

made them much more

Courtside 2002. And good news to those looking forward to November 18: All the games looked spectacular (although we say Nintendo loaded the deck a bit by having them play on HDTVs.). Can Nintendo capture

a share of the market of older gamers currently held by Sony and also being targeted by Xbox? It will take a lot more than a swanky Hollywood party to convince us it can, but Cube Club was a pretty good start.

— Kevin Toyono

■ NO SOFTWARE = NO EXCITEMENT

GameCube Launch in Japan A measly three games spark little interest

The ipponse premiere of GameCube passed with a your on September 16, as GameCube were still a myler supply the day offer the launch, begin having only 500,000 units available (verus, 700,000 units abased for the U.S.), there was nowhere nor the consumer former that accompanied last year's 500, per paydition? 2 release in jopan, when stores featured lines of eager customers often ranking amount the blook.

other hashing around the cooks.

The relative spathy toward feltieshed's new conside came from the cetrometry. The relative spathy toward feltieshed is new control or tags? Moreleas, which consided of tags? Moreleas, which consided of tags? Moreleas, which considered or tags? Moreleas (for the spath) and sectionary areas of plang activating to gamen, which is let not fine control to estimate of the manual plant of the spath of the

ment stores seems to confirm this sentiment.
What does this mean to U.S. general in the short term, not much. There will
be 15 GameCube these available by the end of 100L with a few efferings targeted at,
ending general (see GameCube blanch feature, page No. But if jugan fails to
enthrace GameCube, it may lead general developers to choose PlayStation 2 or
Xbox over GameCube, leaving GameCube owners with little more than first-party
littles from which to choose. — Christophe Royout Klorin Sypons



Ill Few hardcore gamers in Japan had enough interest to buy a GameCube on Day One

simplistic gameplay that

BITS FROM THE EDGE

News Bytes

In consort may have stumbed here and where in heriging 2box to Japan, but it's after to see they're getting there. At a press conference held in Japan this past Cottler, the light of the past of the past of the past of the light of the Ball gene HT amounced that Amped Freezie's convolveding with or remained finate for the Ball gene. Hot, they were pleased to present joicty's flood to 2box's early into that the past of the Ball general study to the past of the Ball general study to the past of the past of the Ball general study and the past of the Ball general study and the past of the Ball general study and the past of the Ball general study and the Ball gen

mail-jongg title or two, it'll be all set.

On the other hand, Microsoft got an inadvertent bit of kicking from the Japanese around

the same time. The Japanese Computer Einfertainment Solvaire Association announced the cancellation of the Spring 2002 Tolyo Game Show, siting declining attendance by both exhibitors and the public. However, given the February 3 Isunch date for Xbox in Japan, Spring TGS had doubtless figured Jargoly into Pércosoft's permotitional place. TGS will apparently now be a single, annual event (just like E3 in the U.S.).

And who is that sending out press releases again from deep in the heart of Texas? Why, It's John Romero and Tom Hall, late (way, way late, as it turned out) of ion Storm, announcing the foundation of a new company, Monkeystone, whose first project is an action-puzzle game called Hyperspoce Delivery Boy for Pocket PC, due out November I. 'fes, it's a small (but "really fun," says Hall) title for a handheld platform, which is where the new company will focus most of its attention, cranking on titles for GBA, Pocket PC, and mobile BREW applications. We can't help but comment on how the almost scrupulously modest goals of Monkeystone could not possibly be any different from the now legendary, grandiose excesses of ion's rollout - what a difference a few years make, eh? (Although, they apparently still haven't ditched that penchant for awloward game names.) Still,

we're glad to have them back, and wish them well.

As by now you've no doubt noticed, Sony

spectacularly falled to lower the U.S. price of PlayStation 2 for this hold sty season. This means then year and a-half-old system will cost exactly as much as a brand-new Xbox (\$239 MSNP), and \$100 more than Nintend

and \$100 more than Nintendor's equally shiry Gamecube (at a palty \$199), in a nod towards falmess, however, Sony Europe actually did significantly drop the price of a PSZ over there — to around the equivalent of \$300 (£199). And yet, this actualy is down, from the previous Euro price of \$385 (£260). Count your blessings while you can.

Here's a case in point: This had to happen sooner or later, and we guess this is as later as it can get, for which we are thankful. THQ, the industry's most consistently profitable company, built on the base of countless wresting games, has

the industry's most consistently profitable company, button the base of counties wresting grame, has found a new property to license and it is — Britney Specer. No, we did not make that up, Ms. Specar' taut, bare turmy will be grance [MS, PC, and Game Boy Advance by sometime next year. We sincerely doubt THQ plans any Britney-MVMF crossover tibles, but maybe if we all with really host all with really host

NextGer







The NextGen **Holiday Book Roundup**

Because the next best thing to playing games is reading about them



Supercade By Van Burnham

10" x 10" hardcover

448 pages, full color, \$49.95

Though well-written and informative, the text in this striong tome definitely takes a back seat to page after page of sense-overloading images, covering every important arcade game and home console from the dawn of the industry to 1984. It's occasionally artistic at the expense of clarity as when the entry describing Asteroids waxes metaphysical, or when a photo taken in 1975 accompanies text that discusses the events of 1977. Still this is the ultimate videogame picture book. If only it went beyond 1984.

Rating ****

Arcade Fever By John Sellers Running Press 8" x 9" softcover: 200 pages, full color \$18.95 This slim volume offers a fun (though slightly too nostalgic) look at 50 classic

arcade machines, seasoned with plenty of pop culture. But it's definitely playing Pengo to the other books' Pac-Man. The prose tends to resemble teen TV hip-speak: "Asteroids rocked, hard style." Phoenix provides far more data. Ultimote History tells better stories, And unlike the larger, classier Supercode, this book shooliffs the cheesy art style of the period instead of paying tribute to it. Rating ****



Rolenta Press 8 1/2" x 10 3/4" softcover. 388 pares, B&W \$24.95

The oneinal bible of videogame history This new, larger edition adds coverage of the years 1997 to 2000. There are still a few inconsistendes. (For example, the Migrovision's release date is given as 1982 on one page and 1979 on another.) The too-sparse photos are still BSW. and Herman is a historian, not a professional writer, so the text can definitely be cumbersome. But there's more raw historical data here than in any book, before or since.

Rating ****









DO-TITOURSELF CAMP PROCREAMMENT WITH THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPE

The Ultimate History of Video Games By Steven L. Kent

Prima Publishing 6" x 9" softcover, 624 pages, B&W, \$18.95

Ment's excelent self-published book, The First Quarter, returns with a new title, IDD more pages (including a new, more current final chapter), a timeline, a BWM placto gallery and mediculous error corrections, a abore times the best read of the bunch, fall or great stories — little the fist-storing relationship between Afair and Ree Gaimes — and constant causes from occole who were there when history happoned.



ZAPI

Steven L. Keel

Zap! The Rise and Fall of Atari

III This com's a bit dated — it was originally positished way is 1961 — and such of the information is covered in other books. But the author's mitgaded predictions for the false (one marky 25 years old) are nearly worth the pricted addition. Case in points. We tide game company is going to desire a case in points. We tide game company is going to desire all the second of the company is going to desire and the second of the company is going to desire a little production of the pricess will probably be to

The Making of Final Fantasy The Spirits Within By Steven L. Kent & Tim Cox Brady Games

II" x II" hardcover, 240 pages, full color \$29.99

This handsome entry has an amazine cover image. tons of concept art, a storyboard gallery, and plenty of fascinating behind-the-scenes Information, But there are some odd inade quacies, Hironobu Sakaguchi's foreword is badly translated. Then, for some bizarre mason. the book devotes 19 pages to reprinting a preliminary draft of the script instead of the final version, Why? (Don't tell us the script wasn't done



when the book went to press — this was a minimated film? Most importantly, the book's page design completely fals to showstee the film's amazing virsual imagers, far too much red relates is devoted to creating an art-deco file, with cits of enopy (i.e. washed) page space and approach playaged took boxes. There are stip player) of mining of prictures you creatly desarging inflienced soons with the phenotons and the Quatro's climactic descent into the crater are strangely uncompared.

Rating *****



PlayStation₂

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ALL 2001













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Star Wars Rogue Squadron II: Rogue Lead -r only for Nintendo G-meCube."











GameCube Watch

GameCube is here. Is Nintendo ready? of the console, the announcements made

By the time you read this, GameCube will be upon us, it's about time. you're probably saving. and we couldn't agree more. As we jump headfirst into full coverage of Nintendo's next-generation console this month. we bid a hearty goodbye to GameCube Watch, But not before taking one last gander at what's happened leading up to the launch

and a brief summary of things to come. **Evil Arrives** Easily the biggest

surprise of the last few months came directly out of Capcom Japan In September, The company announced that it had cancelled the PlayStation 2 version of Resident Evil 4 and, going forward, that the

franchise would be exclusive to Nintendo's next-generation console. The first of the series to hit GameCube is a remake of the original Resident Evil. Director Shinii Mikami, who created the survival

horror phenomenon, is responsible for the update, which features spectacularly enhanced graphics, tweaked gameplay mechanics, and a slightly changed

storyline to boot. The screenshots of the title you see below are running in realtime on

GameCube hardware. Resident Evil (the remake) will hit GameCube March 22 of next year. Following that Cubists will see a port of Resident Evil 2 which. according to Capcom. will not see the major visual overhaul of the original, as doing that would simply take too Resident Evil 0 - a

much time. The original game that takes place almost entirely on a zomble-infested train is set to arrive shortly after that. You'll also see ports of Resident Evil 3: Nemesis and Code: Veronico, both - like Resident Evil 2 - with only minor tweaks from their predecessors. And finally, Capcom will debut the long-anticipated Resident Evil 4 on GameCube at an undisclosed date, presumably sometime In 2003. It's clear that GameCube has become the console of choice for those hoping to blow a few heads off the walking



Cancom is also working on Mickey Mouse for GameCube, which Nintendo has previewed in video form at a number of its shows. However, Shinji Mikami recently told the Japanese press that beginning this past September, he had started work on an allnew, original, still-secret GameCube project. No word on what that title



could be just yet, but given the director's past work it's bound to be something targeted at an older audlence

Fternal (a 3 months) Darkness It seems that Silicon Knights' "psychological thriller* Eternol

Dorkness - a game all too often (and perhaps unfairly) compared to Capcom's zombleliclous franchise - may just en directly up against it next year. Recent word out of Nintendo suggests that the title will see a threemonth delay from its scheduled December 3 release date to late February or early March of 2002 - coincidentally the same time Resident Evil will launch for the next-generation console in lanan According to insiders. the Canadian-based development studio wanted a little more time to iron out chinks In the game's armor, so to speak, before release. Here's hoping that the setback doesn't put the game in a release window where it could be largely overlooked by

NextGen

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franchise.



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Catching air in SF. Looks good, earns style points and offers tasty view. But you lose tap time and possibly your bet. What do you do, pally?











>>> Powersliding. It earns points, but increases risks. A.K.A. crashing. And crashing equals dents. Equals less kudos. Equals loser. Better think fast, chief.











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> > What's driving you?



nicrosoft.com/games/projectgothan



















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→ Alphas

Next Generation warps in, blasts the Mutants, and gets the scoop, all before the Baiters are spawned





DEFENDER

Publisher Midway # Developer: 7 Studios # Pelesse Date Fall 2002 # Orgin US

Can the publisher of Spy Hunter and Gauntlet Legends resurrect the mother of all shooters? It's sure as hell going to try

Arcade classics are usually better left untouched. The games that we remember as beauly queens 20 years ago typically come back today looking like the Bride of Frankenstein. But after Midway's excellent 3py Hunter modernization, we can't help being existed over the company's next projects a reworking of Eugene jarvis' finger-bitsteringly intenses spaces booter. Defender,

It's simply all-out action, with ome small elements of strategy involved. You just jump in and start gighting, just like the original Defender," promises Product fanager Patrick Dilon. And in fact, he basic theme of gameplay—basting zillions of human-abducting, issually abstract, techno-organic hingies from outer space into little, into pieces—emains refreshing pieces—emains refreshing in pieces—emains refreshing.

However, almost everything has increased in Scale, For instance, the action will now range across seven different celestal bodies, from Saturn's moon, Titan, to the big, blue marble we call home. Actually, "big, blue marble" may not be accurate: "It's no longer a blue plance," lithmates Producer Dave Brooks. "It's more of a red. It's not the peaceful Earth you know."

Your ship, too, has evolved. You'll eventually have six to choose from, each with different firepower, speed armor, and cargo capacity. Ships will also boast new abilities necessitate by the move to a 3D environment. Pre-programmed evasive maneuven like a barnel roll, a quick turnaround and even a 360-degree loop can all

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be executed with a simple twist of the joystick. Then there's the Super

Thrust, a rocket boost that can carry the player swiftly out of danger, replacing the original game's Hyperspace feature. The Smart nb, too, will most likely be replaced by a variety of special replaced by a variety or ap-weapons — each specific to a certain ship — ranging from a high-powered shot with a shotgun-like blast pattern to a small-scale nuclear detonation. Every ship will also wield some sort of basic guided missile attack - a critical addition if the ame is to preserve the frantic action of the original. "In Stor Wors Storfighter, you're always lining your enemies up exactly in front of you in order to hit them," Brooks explains. "We didn't want that. We have so

many enemies; if you shoot at something, you need to hit it." Your ships' specifications can also be upgraded over time, thanks to the humanoids you protect. There are three types of colonists, who must typically be airlifted safely back to your base. Which ship upgrades you earn depend on which kind of colonists you rescue. If you save military men, they'll beef up your weaponry. Scientists, in turn, will enhance your armor, and possibly even develop a cloaking device. Finally, engineers will design faster engines or increase each ship's ability to carry things.

This cargo capacity becomes more Important than over before, thanks to the colonists' other role - that of ground support. Enemies will drop power-ups that, when deposited near (and subsequently manned by) a colonist, will become fully independent ground units such as tanks or le launchers. These units can then be stratesically placed to protect

"You just jump in and start fighting, just like the original Defender."

an important installation, or they can

even be carried around the battle field. In fact, they're better at destroy-ing some enemies than you are. You'll need every bit of help you can get, too. Five of the six original

enemy types - Landers, Mutants, Balters, Bombers, and Swarmers are now joined by at least two brutal new classes. The first is the Ogres massive ground units that tend to resemble huge walking tanks, or so Secret that Midway would reveal only its name: Raptors. Each class also mutates into several different subclasses, each with its own abili ties, Al, and (we hope) weak spots to be exploited

They're also brutally intelligent. even utilizing RTS-style group Al at

THE NEW MUTANTS





Ill Mutant, old and new





that 7 Studios employs several members of the team that redesigned Bottlezone for Activision. Luckily, your ground units are plenty smart as well, and certain missions will grant you Al-controlled wingmen. In fact, if you don't mind the fact

WHAT'S EUGENE GOT TO DO WITH IT

NG: Can Defender work in 3D3 Eg: The key is threat management and pace. In 2D Defender, the player has to deal with up to 25 simultaneous threats, targets, and friendles. The kill rate can approach 3-4 similar challenge in 3D without overloading the player or graphics subsystems. If you

NG: What's your take? If: There is awesome potential for a kide-as 3D Defender. I hope Midway and 7 indios can pull this baby off, 'cause if they lon't, I'll have to do it moself.

you and a friend can even take to the air together, frying aliens cooper-atively in splitscreen mode. Given the team's Bottlezone roots, will we see RTS-style base building in Defender as well? Maybe just a little, says Brooks. "We want to get the game 100% done as a shooter, as an action game, before we address that. But there are preliminary plans to Incorporate some realtime strategy elements into the game."

Defender is far and away the most

ambitious of Midway's arcade

updates to date, and we have to end. But Spy Hunter turned out

admit we aren't yet completely convinced that the project will gel in the beautifully, and we're convinced that this development team has the skills to get the job done. Now, whom do we have to bribe to make sure Bosconion is next? - Eric Brotcher

ground units such as tanks

and missile launchers.



SHREK



Easily the most impressive aspect about the game is its graphical prowess.

- GameSpot July 2001

Shrek looks gorgeous and its attention to detail is astounding...

- Expert Gamer september 2001

The production values are movie-like...They'll wonder if you are playing the game 'Shrek', or watching the movie Shrek. And people will get hooked.

- cnn.com May 2001







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SHREK











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BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

Undead fiends beware! Buffy's finally ready for action

You only have to watch a single episode of the television series Buffy the Vompire Slaver to understand why it's being made into a videogame. The premise? An attractive heroine takes out vampires and demons in her hometown using her wits and extensive martial arts skills - not necessarily in that order Stall, no matter how aptly the concept fits the interactive medium

petting Buffy to consoles has been a long. drawn-out project, Originally scheduled as a PSX and Dreamcast game, Buffy Is finally surfacing - years later - on Xbox. On the surface, the same doesn't look to be more than a flashy beat-'em-

up. Players take control of Buffy and run around town punching, kicking, and staking the hell out of the vampire population - or anything else that gets in her











enemies are a bit smarter than the moronic thugs normally encountered in this kind of game. Try to go the whole way through the game with the same pattern, and they'll actually learn to counter your moves, forcing you to constantly improvise and learn new ones.

it's not all fighting, either A lot of design emphasis has been placed on creating unique and well-thought-out puzzles for players to solve. "In addition to the common 'find this' and 'push that' type, we're encouraging players to observe their environment and use common sense to overcome obstacles." points out Co-Lead Designer Tony Barnes, "For example, an electronically locked door blocks Buffy's path and there's no key to be found. The box that

ion com

operates the door is clearly visible, but she can't affect it. Upon close inspection, a nozzle from a fire alarm system is located near the electronic lock and a nile of trash is located at the end of the hallway: By using a Hellfire vial, Buffy can set the pile of trash on fire, which starts the fire alarm, and the water shorts out the bax, which opens the door"

In the course of the game's events. other stars from the show - like Willow Cordela, Xander and Giles - will occasionally show up to give you some help or, at the very least, brief you before and after each mission. In fact, if it all goes according to plan, the game should play out like a missing chapter from Season Three of the show with all of the appropriate attitudes, story twists, and action scenes you might expect. Of course, that's also the zinger: The game has been in development so long that the show itself has actually passed it by Buffy has since graduated from high school, gone off to college, lost her mom, and

gained a sister - among other things. Still in development, we must concede that Buffy as an interactive entity has the potential for gaming greatness. Given the show's popularity, the game is virtually assured attention when it comes out next year We hope it'll feature well-polished gameplay that warrants it. - Bloke Fischer

The team is doing its best to make sure that the gille a fighting game than a traditional beat-'em-up

















obiwan.lucasarts.com













WRECKLESS

Drive like the Blues Brothers through the streets (and malls) of Hong Kong

This mission-based driving game's title seems to imply its players won't wreck anymore. But to paraphrase an old drinking joke, they won't wreck any less, either Formerly known as Double S.T.E.A.L., the game stomps on the accelerator of a next-level physics engine that explores the ramifications of decidedly full-contact driving

physics to make the game more exciting enthuses Lead Designer Masumi Nagaya, "The ability to smash through many different objects on the road, to ram enemy cars into one another or to jump from the second story of a mail and ram into an enemy car - these are all examples of what the physics allows

most being destruction-focused variants on the established chase/deliver/escort themes. There's the added appeal of jumping over a dim-sum stand in a fourwheel ATV, or barreling through a

densely populated shopping mall in a monster truck. Through it all, there are two storylines, which Nagaya describes as 'very humorous, Hong Kong-style, wacky." One chronicles the adventures of two anti-Yakuza policewomen, and another details the exploits of a pair of male spies trying to discover the Yakuza's ties to the police force. Oddly

this is Bunkasha's first game since the 8bit era (though some members of the team do have some industry experience). But if the gameplay in Wreckless comes together as impressively as the underlying technology, it certainly won't be the last. - Eric Bratcher





ILCTION













Wild Water Racing. It's time up the waters of Bale tear it up over the Great Barrier Red, maneuver through the Vertice canals Become one of eight rebellious index is year throttle a Sea-Doo over water that looks so real you! meed a wetsuit. Jump wakes, fly over ramps and smach mough the windows of a waterfront high rise Battle your way to the finish his through 18 inseedably deballed courses all anough of the gibbs. Were google above.





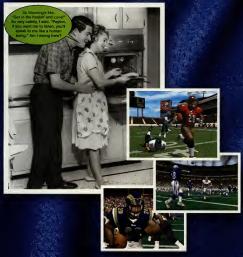
Mild Lyrics





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This is your day. You get up, you go to work, someone makes fun of your momma, you tear an ACL, you hear trade rumors, you go home. This isn't playing the NFL-this is playing in the NFL. The graphics, the camera angles, the intensity, the trophy case, Have a good night, Mr. Manning. See you tomorrow.













■ XBOX. PLAYSTATION 2

TIMESPLITTERS 2

Publisher Eides # Developer Free Radical Design # Release Date: Spring # Orgn: U

With time on its side, Free Radical Design aims to show us what PS2 can really do

It is unnic that the first TimeSpitters, a PS2 first-person shooter based around time travel, was actually hampered by a lack of development. time more than anything else. Under right pressure to make PS25 U.S. blanch, Fire Radical Desgri, a team that includes several ex-members of the Goldenijke desgri team, smrttly amited. the scope of its first game. This decision enabled it to release a polished, original title on the same day the system itself hit the shehes — quite a feat for a company that had been formed just 18

Still, while the game garnered some acclaim, players expected a bit more from it. "It was annoying to have people

months earlier.

saying things like, 'Oh, it's not like GoldenBye'," concedes Head of Design David Doak, who's clearly still irritated. 'It wasn't lintended to be like GoldenBye. We didn't forget how to do it; we were just doing something slightly different."

For TimeSpitters 2, the team is again doing something slightly different, but with a greater sense of purpose. Free





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→ Alphas





III Sneak up on an enemy, and you can take him out before he even notices you're there. But be careful that you're not being watched by a security camera, because if the alarm sounds, you'll be in a lot of trouble



LEVEL-HEADEL

First Reliable Design was pleased with the accessibility and facilities of former again. The time remote, father than plea being that for the former again. The time remote, father than plea being that for the former again. The time remote can set up story texts in which year former to be the second please of the second please of the sector will undergo a direction being the way or jet carry on from sector will undergo a direction being the way or jet carry on from the please of the second please of the section of the sector will be section of the section of section of

> Radical has collated gamers' feedback on TimeSpitters and has been busy working on something with which to silence its critics. In short, you could say the team is alming to do better than Goldenbye.

aiming to do deter than Cooloneye. Certain elements remain the same, however. You're still an agent betting against the end TimeSpitters across a variety of time zones, raiging from the COM West to a Openpunk fluine. There is still a multiplayer option as well as a map editor (see boouch. New this time around are potentially superhi Likric capabilities and a radically enhanced Story mode, with comprehensive mission scenarios.

To convincingly demonstrate the improvements, Doals proceeds to load up the first level for a demo — a Stberna military base, complete with a massive dam as the buckstep (one of several theoly references to Goldenfye), immediately, the visual improvement is devident. The enthoriment is far more complice than anything seen in Timesphilters, with a more adventurous use of teoriums. But it's the enhancement in the characters but it is perhaps moot.

impressive. Not only are they substantially more detailed in terms of geometry, but their animation routines have been markedly improved.

As our demo continues, other improvements become evident. Enemy troops appear more intelligent than in the first game — the result of a complete reworking of the Al routines. Enemies can now react appropriately if you cross their relicid or search, which shifts when their their head. Guards also react to any noise you make, enabling you to use stealth to go by some objectives if you're willy enough. Naturally, the team is caper to copicit these advantages in the levels it is bufulen, incorporating more Al-driven objectives. Ge. antually observing or interacting with Al characters) alongistic the traditions joint to point tasks.

It all adds up to a shooter that's more well rounded than the previous effort, and that will surely shine when it's released in 2002. Now that Fire Radical has been given the time it needs so realize the game's potential, we smell a possible PSZ classic in the making Even if it's not Goldensiye 2, TimeSpitters 2 should still earn itself the faris it deserves. — Nigel Edge

Programme and the state of the



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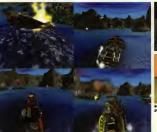




BLOOD WAKE

Developer Stormfront has lad a couple eggs recently — especially the Ubi-Soft-published Pool of Rodionce, which shipped plainly unfinished and is sterally harmful to your PC if uninstalled without being patched (though Ubi Soft's Od department must take some of

the blame for this). But Stormfront may just redeem itself completely with the title, in which hydro Thunder's fluid physics meet Stor Wors Storfighter's mission-based structure and Twisted Metal Block's focus on manic vehicular combat. The water is simply awesome, both visually and in the way it affects your craft. The beta build we played needed balancing — some of the boats were a bit sluggish, particularly when backing up — but all the elements of a great game were definitely.





undeniably present.



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→ Milestones





bi-Won may be little more than a typical platformer with a great

STAR WARS OBI-WAN

The bird-person action title is notionous among PC garming circles owing to its long belaguered development history. We could have told them the problem: it should have been a console game, which is now is. The level we plend was being, but controlling the light sales with the right axising mich feels perfectly natural. Claring up Greedo, Walturuma, and even a Strangley agrossive Hummerhead into tittle churks is both effortlessy thatthe and incredibly satisfaction. The fore remains could until them notice.





III The player has a wide assortment of light saber

■ PLAYSTATION 2

JOHNNY MOSELEY MAD TRIX

Do we really need a Tony Howk variant on skis? Actualty, we might. The courses are hugy and wild. There are some sweet animators (although we hope they blend a bit better in the final build.) And the stunts are truly over the top flour. still authentic — these guys are insince. One by goterating problem: There's no multiplier at all, a first with at the game's main competition — Shown Pathmer's Pro Snowbocovier, which has an awaterne "Puth" mole (Med 900) — definitely does not share.









quite nice



► Milestones



DRAGON RAGE

with the section of t



om flame attacks to ice crystals, or bolts of lightning



strangely like Midway's Defender remake, doesn't it? See Alphas, page 3

■ PLAYSTATION 2

MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE

The FC games are still forming at the mouth over Medial of the Honor Alled Asouth, Bhyddian of palyses can boot forward to the honor Alled Asouth, Bhyddian of palyses can boot forward to the new Asouther from the developer responsible for the series original Refysician formations. The original games here, jirrany Patterson, has returned, this time to steal a super-weapon that could be the decider factor in the war this at the depend the time, with more weapons, multiple solutions to many levels — some pitters like stealing many like being regime — and team testics, demed from the fact that.



touch will still keep you alive a lot longer

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PlayStation₂2

CHECK ITI T'S THE AMPED GUIDE TO FREE STYLE!

A BASIC GUIDE TO THE MOUNTAIN









At Home. The nice part of this trick is that once you're insame enough to try it, you're probably ready for a magazine cover.







The nice thing about freestyle is that you can huck in the park (fig. A) or boost in the pipe (fig. B) and crack your pelvis either way. HE MEDIA INTERVIEW



Porget the shout-out Act like you care

DO: Act sullen Speak incoherently

> POCKET PHRASE TRANSLATOR

ENGLISH:
"THAT WAS A NICE
TRICK."
FREESTYLE:
"DAG!"

ENGLISH:
"I LIKE YOUR
PANTS."
FREESTYLE:
"DAG."

ENGLISH:
"I THINK I'VE
FRACTURED MY
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OUT NOW!

PlayStation_®2









■ GAMECUBE, XBOX, PLAYSTATION 2, ARCADE

■ Publisher: Namco ■ Developer: Namco ■ Release Date: Late 2001 (areade), 2002 (everything else) ■ Origin: Ju

Can Namco's finest fighter maintain its cutting-edge appeal?

The original Soul Collbur weapon-fighting gameplay has is undeniably among Dreamcast's finest tit The game's Zen-like balance of finely tuned, weapon-based iting, gorgeous visuals, and fictive extras established it as one of Dreamcast's few true m-sellers and a high waterrk that other developers are still striving to beat. Now, two years later, Director/Producer Hiroaki Yotoriyama and his team at Namco Development Dept #1 are back and must do what others so far have failed to accomplish: They must top themselves.

Luckily, their vision remains intact. While the world's other developers have focused on streamlining and expanding on the "fist and feet" kung-fu experience, Soul Collbur's unique

remained unchallenged. It's easy to see why, too. Those who indulged in this Dreamcast masterpiece found the different weapons and accompanying styles tuned to perfection. No matter which weapon you chose, it just felt right With a PlayStation 2-based, System 246 arcade board powering its latest creation, the team has already managed to eclipse the look of its last effort, but that's only a small part of the overall formula. The real challenge will be whether or not

its revised fighting engine can stand against the latest heavyweights: DOA 3, Virtuo Fighter 4, and even

Namco's

Tekken 4. If any game has a chance of dragging fighting gamers away from their tradi tional kung-fu battles, though, it's going to be this one. The first thing the team needs to do, however, is convince the arcade audience to bite. The original Soul Colibur was also released as an arcade game, but it didn't ally garner any came out on

Cover Story still working to make the





Dreamcast late the next year Yotoriyama feels that the success of the Dreamcast version - and most notably its incredibly popular Mission Battle mode nes the main problem with the initial release to arcade. "It appeared that the game was reciated mainly by hardcom users and not by casual users as i'd hoped," he candidly admits. "We noticed that people who understood the game mechanics were enjoying Soul Collbur for a long time [in the arcade], so it became obvious we were lacking a tutorial. That was something we fixed in the console version and I think it was one of the fundamental reasons for the consumer version's success. In Soul Colibur 2, we want a large public to enjoy it and I think we managed to design the game accordingly this time."

Key to this accessibility will be



a subtle reworking of the game's controls. The stick and fourbutton layout (kick, block, horizontal slash, and vertical slash) will remain the same as in the first game, but many of the moves will now be easier to pull off. It's obviously an issue that hasn't been completely resolved yet, but Yotoriyama stresses that he's not attempting to dumb down the gameplay at all; instead he's bringing it closer to the ideas he had for the first game, "Soul Collbur, in many aspects, was very different compared to a standard 3D fighting game, especially in its





to break this rule and make the gameplay evolve. We weren't able to make it real enough at that time; now it's one of the

likely to fall off the edge and lose the round. They won't, however, have to watch out for obstacles that could get in the

obstacles upset the purity of the fighting game experience "There won't be any 3D (environmental) elements in Soul

about two fighters confronting each other. It's about a player who tries to find a weak point (continued on page 70)







#8 IN A SERIES OF MOTIVATIONAL POSTERS



HUMILIATION

LEARN HOW TO DO SOMETHING WELL AND THEN USE IT AGAINST AN OPPONENT. REPEATEDLY!







Over 45 mini-games set in six futuristic areas where the competition is fast and furious. The music



you rip into the game never stops. Four friends go in; 1 winner and 3 pathetic losers come out.





Only Losers Don't Win.



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Cover Story

(continued from page 68) in his adversary. These are the basics. There's no need for 3D elements as well." And, finally, it's a given with any fighting game sequel especially a Namco one - that there will be a wealth of new characters to choose from. While we're certain to see some returning faces like Mitsurugi, Astaroth, and lvy, many new hters will also be available. like Sophitia's (from the first ame) sword-swinging sister, Cassandra, and another female warrior named Talim

Yotoriyama was reluctant to

count, but he did say that there

table characters and a

wealth of hidden ones beyond

they'll be unlocked, however is

that. Who they'll be, and how

would be more than 10 initially

lock down a final character

still being determined. Our guess Is that — as in the Tekken games — many of the characters will be unlocked according to how

long the machine has been on. Honestly, it's still too early to tell whether or not Soul Colibur 2 will win the mindshare that the first never really picked up in the arcades. Unfortunately, the team wasn't comfortable enough to let us get any real hands-on time, so it's impossible to say whether it has managed to preserve the elegance and

intensity of the first game or whether the control tweaks have turned it into a different beast altogether. The pedigree's definitely there for this to be the best fighter to come out of Japan since, well, the first Soul our. But with DOA3 and VF4 also in contention this winter, it's

anyone's game. - Bloke Fischer

COMING TO YOUR CONSOLE

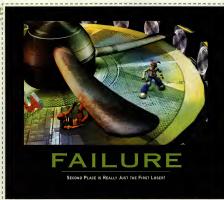
According to Yoloviyama, his team has already salars a good look at the commists to see which they can do, but the boam is curredly only working on the sensite risks. After that's down, it is given to focus on the common versions, in bot, home versions planted by the Yoloviyama of the Common versions and home versions given do be a Yoloviyam to the defense of Corans, he also mediate that time will probably be a Sig limiting factor — as it was with the reading that they will be a Well bringing factor — as it was with the forecast relation. It will explain the the focal of Yakama salary met to release the three consumer versions at the same time," he half joles, "so the coming mentils wit ready look horoliste for ou."







#11 IN A SERIES OF MOTIVATIONAL POSTERS









Over 45 mini-games set in six futuristic arenas where the competition is fast and furious. The music



you rip into the game never stops. Four friends go in: 1 winner and 3 pathetic losers come out.





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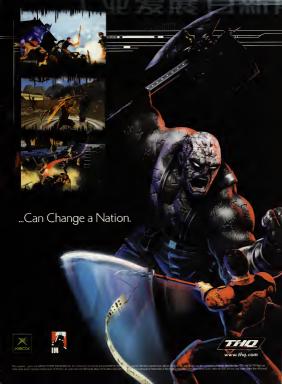


The Force Of One Man...

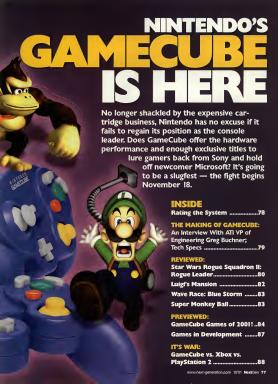


"Part Final Fight, part Jedi Knight, and part Unreal, New Legends is all Chinese stick-wielding, ass-kicking loveliness." Official Xbox Magazine









→Special

GAMECUBE RATING THE SYSTEM

Next Gen puts Nintendo's latest console under the microscope and pulls no punches in analyzing its strengths and weaknesses

HARDWARE POWER

In this large, may, this county press to the ClaimsChairs, Addition leads, Albaught, capable of speaks, a make of intermediate florids and processing a relief endigent architecture, in the final analysis Gassaccides is burnly states of believed. The florids compared to proceed the first the company for medication. Canadical is asset that the contraction of the medication of the contraction of the contraction



CURRENT SOFTWARE LIBRARY

Attough legions of scruaning Nationdo fans will predictably disagree, GameCube arrives with a short list of launch this that are, for the most part, satisfacts arough, Royale Squiderini. If Not of them, Including Lody's Monation and Wore Roce, these Sorrer, are pretty and re-southly full, but show ariser shallow and short. Agrin, among the Nintendo histhrid, we death this will make full the form of the control of the control of the will make full the form of the control of the control of the state of the control of the control of the control of the state of the control of the control of the control of the state of the control of the control of the control of the state of the control of the control of the control of the state of the control of the control of the control of the control of the state of the control of the control of the control of the control of the state of the control of the control of the control of the control of the state of the control of the state of the control of the state of the control of the contro

for the record.



PUTURE SOFTWARE PROGNOSIS



that Plus, big third-pary franchises should make a strong showings fonce in headed to GC, for example, and we wouldn't be surprised if it stayed put there, Camechale was designed with carrying on Niterando own franchises in mind, but it's also attracting thirdparty publishers. New Resident Cell titles will be party publishers. New Resident Cell titles will be sould then yet the country of the country of the Soul Cellbor 2. We expect much more.

ENextGen ★★★★☆

MARKETING MUSCLE

With a few reachin comprision (the Ferifers Cartz Campaign, for complet). Nitation has inhirty of reintensity medium as a pages that, nevertheless, get the message out. And for a Nitation product, it appears that's all that's needed. The Nitetand or product, it appears that's all that's needed. The Nitetand onabone will sell systems and games to Nitation(is regar audience, Adult from the soul assessment of also, Nitetando is working with Adult from the soul assessment of also, Nitetando is working with the Pepper and the Exercicable channel on glesseng promotions, to play Campaigness and the Section of the Section of the Section of the Conference of the Section of the Section of the Section of the Section of the Conference of the Section of the



ENextGen ****

Now well faculties statist up seports entirely on state point or possible, but has option, his base does must be foreigned soft Metal Recharged passes, for five data must be reclaimed to the statistic recharged passes, for five families, thereigned soft Metal Recharged passes, for five families, thereigned so the statistic recharged passes are provided to the statistic recharged passes are provided

Control yourself GAMECUBE CONTROLLERS Gotta catch 'em all

Third-party GameCube peripherals will be slower in coming to GameCube; thanks I Mintendo's strict "no Reensed products" philosophy, most items will have been reverse-freedincered, which means walkin, until after the finished GameCube hits the market (at least le japan). But some pro-

M.S.R.P.: \$29.99

Nytoo Radio Hyer MS.R.P: \$39.99 (not shown) Nyto 0 Knockourt Pro MS.R.P: \$39.99

InterAct Black Thunder Racing Wise MS.RP: \$39.99

InterAct Shadowillade Arcade Stick M.S.RP: \$39.99

InterAct Superi M.S.R.P.: \$19,99

InterAct StarFire LightBl: MS.R.P.: \$29.99

(not shown)
InterAct Fishing Controller
MS.R.P. \$29.99

Mad Catz Control Pad Pro M.S.R.R: \$19.99



Pelican C3 Driving Whee M.S.R.P.: \$24.95 (not shown)

Pelican G3 Arcade Stick M.S.R.P.: \$19.99



Thrustmaster Compact Racing Wheel ... M.S.R.P.: TBA





GAMECUBE TECH SPECE

CPU: 485MHz iBM "Gekko" Power PC processor

Graphics: Custom i62MHz ATI/Nintendo "Flipper" Chip RAM: 24MB iT-SRAM Main Memory, i6MB DRAM A-Memory

A-Memory Memory

Bandwidth: 2.6GB/sec Polygons/sec: 6-12 million in real-world game conditions Audie: Custom Macronix 16bit DSP capable of 64 simultaneous channels (this is actually incorporated into Ripper) Storage: Proprietary optical disc system - 15:GB 3-inch discs, 44th flash memory card Connectivity: None included. Ethernet and modern adapters will be sold separately

Extras: Wavebird Wireless controllers. Can link to Game Boy Advance What does it mean?

What does it meen?
Nintendo's strength inn't so much
in pure power, but in elegance.
The custom chipset used for
CameCube may not push as many
polys as the competition, but they
allow for all sorts of cool visual
effects with minimal computation.



THE MAKING OF GAMECUBE

Who designed the microchips Nintendo is gambling on?

ATI's Greg Buchner shares his story on how GameCube was born

At the vice president of engineering at ATI research, Greg Buchner has been on the design of manufacture and the person of the design of the control of the person of the control of the c

NEXT GEN: Before being acquired by ATI, your company was called Art-X. How did Art-X get founded, and how did it get involved with Nintendo?

folks who ended up at Art-X had been at Silicon Graphics, and part of our original floating team of our original floating team of as for body as 1993, in '97, SGI started list downs of the floating as 1993, in '97, SGI started list downs of the floating team start of the floating team started in the floating team started in

started working together.

106: At what point did Art-X become part of ATI, and how has

GB: The acquisition happened in April of 2000. We were still an engineering company, and ATI already had the infrastructure in place to support products and the operations side of it. in return, ATI opt a very key good team of designers, and we allowed them to designers, and we allowed them to they wanted to get into a new business space that they wanted to get into. By the time we did the acquisition, we were finished with the [Flipper] hardware design.

NOS: How different was the development of the GarmeCube processor compared to the one for NASE GBI: Toget to a isunch now, you need to have silicon working a year to 18 months before leanth. To have that working silicon, you pretty much need to lock and load a year ahead of that, in terms of

Buckers of Spacewell 200

your design being done, and you're out there making a part. That is certainly one challenge, trying to predict where technology is going to be just from a silicon process.

(staterniew comissed on page 89)



Star Wars Rogue Squadron II: Rogue Leader

Want to be in the movie? This is as close as it comes

The key to Rogue Squodron If's success as a game is that it int't relying on the Stor Wors name to provide the entire experience; it's actually a fairly accomplished shooter on its own, with fine control, great graphics, and lots of subtle touches. Then, when you beautifully integrate the

world's best sci-fi universe —

well, the overall experience is simply incredible.

The gameplay is pure action. As leader of flogue Squadron, you'll pilot a variety of rebel crafts — A-Wings, X-Wings, B-Wings, and Y-Wings, along with a few surprises — on a variety of missions starting with the Doath Star Run in the first movie and ending with the

Death Star Battle from Return of the Jedi. Along the way you'll bomb the heck out of Imperial turrets, take out AF-AFs with tow cables, and even take on a Star Destroyer (or severall).

This game not only ups the scale of each encounter, but also makes sure to introduce new gameplay, tactics, and enemies with each successive



THE MAKING OF GAMECUBE

point of view fin this particular case, we worker your young with CRI making a new process, the embassical DRAWs, cometting that was very interesting things. The disagraph terminal very interesting things. The disagraph terminals very interesting things, the disagraph terminals very interesting things. The disagraph terminals very little size start eventuring under large, they had maybe \$50,000 terminals on. Higher had you little size start and you know to looking feword to the next consists, fault spile; the office of voice with very case; its increasing, but the amount of or 950 million transitions. The amount of work we're dainy is increasing, but the amount of time we have to do it it is decreasing.

the chip from start to finish?

GIL: At our peak, we might have gotten up to 40 people, but the bulk of the work was done with probably a team of 20. We worked with IBM on making changes to their Power PC, to make it better for paming, and worked with MoSys on

how the interface to the memory should look.

NG: As a system is divided into many parts,
was it difficult to coordinate the development
of the Flipper chip?
GIB: Everything in the system is connected to

the chip we distined. The CPU talks to nothing dies other thin Player the main memory talks to nothing the both of than Ripp. The consoriest sale only to Ripper; the dies drive talks directly to Ripper; the dies drive talks directly to Ripper; the dies drive talks directly to Ripper; the dies drive talks encely hardware partners fill didn't really need to know about main memory or the controller. They didn't touch them.

rea: So you're saying Hipper is more than j a graphics processor? GB: If you take away main memory and the

CPU, everything else is in that chip. All of the I/O functions, the memory controller, the video processing, and the audio. So, yes, it's more than just graphics.

level. And while some scenarios feature clear-cut goals, others require you to juggle several tasks at once in order to procure victory, adding a subtle yet welcome dose of strategy and planning to the frenetic action experience. Our only caveat is that the game does get nely difficult near the end. hile that's typical for a oter, the incredibly steep ming curve (which starts really ramping up about halfway through) will no doubt catch some casual players by surprise.

Still, with some work, gamers will probably make it throu ne in a couple of days. After that, you'll find it's time to go back and start upgrading your nes on each level so you can unlock the secret levels. And. overall, while we're not big fans of retreading the same ground again and again, the multi-tiered medal system used here (combined with the relatively short mission times) makes it pretty fun. Trust us - there are also a few surprises you don't necessarily need to unlock, but

you just need to find. While some out there will



complain that this game isn't anything really new, we argue that the incredible graphics, awesome soundtrack, and hite-knuckie gameplay — we actually whooped out loud after we barely finished one harrowing level — make this the most

GameCube so far Whether you're flying under the crossfire of AT-ATs on Hoth or defending a rebel train as it makes its way to

a heavily guarded imperial hangar, this is the Stor Wors experience at its best. And that's all we've ever wanted.

ENextGen ★★★★☆

Bottom Line: If you're going to buy a GameCube, you're going to want — no, you're going to need — this game.



The All part of the game, the dynamics — all the random code that you wouldn't want to reduce to sifton — is running on Geldon Things that really have to be accelerated are done on Filipper, like audio processing, that processing could other chew up all of Geldon, or could be handled by a dedicated set of sates in Filoner.

GB: Once Nintendo picked Dolphin as a codename for GameCube, we named it Flipper the next morning. A whole set of things took on a fish or sea theme. There was also a Marlin, a Barnacle, a Minnow, a Splash, and a Drift

NCL. The focus of japan and our team's work together included the disc drive, the controlle and the peripherals. What the graphics would be - the OS, the APIs - that was more of the focus of our team working with Howard's team. figuring out what we wanted to do

NG: What were the major concerns during

lot of focus on cost as well as making it some-thing developers would love and want to code to. So we set these high-level goals to be cheap yet high-performance, and to be something that's easy to program.

NG: Microsoft sought out developer opinions in its research to build Xbox's specs. How instrumental were Nintendo's developers in helping set the features for this hardware? : From a raw graphics point of view, not very (interview continued on page \$5)







_uigi's Mansion

Luigi's house party, or Resident Evil for kids?

Jump around, jump around, get out your seat and — stop. Please stop jumping. We've been jumping around since Miyamoto introduced us to Mario onkey Kong back in 1981, and ow. 20 years and a thousand rio clones later, it's time to stop. So it's not all that surprising that Shigeru Miyamoto, the man

who ploneered the jumping game (though you could also argue David Crane with PitfoR) has moved on to create a different kind of game for the launch

a haunted house adventure that swaps out the really spoolsy

of Nintendo's GameCube Luigi's Monsion is, very simply rons of the first Resident Evil

along the way. Refreshingly, none of the buttons on the GameCube controller will make Luigi take to the air Instead, you'll find a button that takes the air to Luigi. The main gameplay mechanic comes through the use of Luigi's ghost-busting device. Not only does this unique backpack suck in the ghosts, but its vacuum properties extend to all kinds of ects in the game. Tablecloths can be sucked off tables, chandeliers can be made to swing, and dressers to shake. The physics

for charming, cartoonish ghosts on par with those seen in Disney's Haunted Mansion ride. Players control Luigi as they

explore the house and solve a

few puzzles, exorcising ghosts

herald more imaginative eplay than we've seen in some time. The ghost-catchir which makes up most of the action, plays like a fishing game as players must first balt, hook and engage in a tug-of-war with numerous, colorful specters.

Unfortunately it's here that the game gets a little repetitious Luigi's Monsion is short and fairly easy; it took us about eight hours to beat, mostly because we were struggling with Japanese text. Meanwhile, there's not much to do aside from sucking everything up. Still, it's engaging enough that you'll want to play all the way through, and hopefully this departure from traditional platform-jumping gameplay will serve as a welcome wake-up call

to other game developers.

echanics and the level of interaction with the environment ENextGen ★★★★☆

tom Line: An entertaining first effort for GameCube. Not on epic scale of Mario — but then again there's no jumping.



Wave Race: Blue Storm

No surprises here

Next to Mario 64, Waw Roce was the crown jev of Nintendo's N64 launch line well does its sequel shi off GameCube? First, the obvio g. Everything else look ell, kind of plain. Clearly, the ks were kept very basic so they could run at full speed in the game has a kind of cartoon colored look, which isn't neces-

sarily bad or good, but might not be to everyone's taste. What really matters is how it plays, and just as with Wove Roce 64, you'll have a blast just



me plays basic course while zig-zagging arrough buoys. Eight competitor an now race onscreen at once and amazing weather effects, such as rain and fog, have been ided that affect the size and

added that affect the size and ferocity of the waves. And per-forming stunts now earns you points toward a turbo, & la SSX. This is also a multiplayer gem, with both two- and four-player splitscreen competitions that run just as smoothly as the single-player race. It must be said that a

6 0000

fast-action game like this is so much more satisfying with virtu-

The only real complaint here is that Blue Storm just isn't as ound-breaking as its predeces higher-poly versions of those in

Wove Roce 64, and while they've been tweaked with new details and shortcuts, it still feels

able blast to play, and the whole package has been given that slick Nintendo polish.

ElNextGen ★★★★☆

uper Monkey Ball

Thank goodness for mini-games game, meaning the main gameplay

the best there is at designing quirky arcade fare, and nowhere is this better exemplified than in its first GameCube game. While the concept is as quirky as they come

There's no doubt that Sega is - think Morble Modness with a monkey inside a transparent marble - it still works owing to some exemplary tuning and tight controls The problem is that, at its heart. Super Monkey Boll is still an arcade



Il You've got to have a lot of finesse if you want to finish Super Monkey Boll's

is extremely simple. Players must guide their monkey (in his ball) through a variety of obstades collect bananas, and make it to the finish line. As you play the higher difficulty levels, the tracks get narrower and steeper with more tricky moving parts to navigate. Simple in concept, and emovable in execution - for a little while.

Thankfully the team has added a ton of extras. There are a few highly entertaining party games, including a monkey-fighting mode where players try to knock each other off a platform using glant spring-loaded boxing gloves (similar to Crosh Bosh). Some extra mini-games can be unlocked (bowling, golf, etc.) if you have the patience to gather



M Monkey-pool is one of several m games that add variety to the gam enough points to do so.

Still, no matter how many extras that the team has added. we found it hard to commit any significant time to Super Monkey Bolt Not unlike Crazy Taxi, you'll have fun every time you play but the concept sets tiring pretty quickly and you'll want to step away for a while.

ENextGen ★★★☆☆

bottom Linu: A fun party game, but a little shallow to play for more than 30-minute blocks.



A quick, hard look at the dirty dozen games that will be available between the launch on November 18 and the end of the year

Port or sequel? Tricky for GameCube is a little bit of boti almost falling into the "more of the same" category well served by Modden and Tony Howk. Still, the franchise is only in its second iteration, so there's room for dramatic improvements: Improved Al gives opposing boarders a wider variety of interactions, and new tricks have been added. Finding shortcuts was an addictive element of SSX, and this has been enhanced through expanded maps. If Tricky runs at a consistent 60fps, watch out.



SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE

One part party game and three parts fighting game, Super Smosh lets players pummel each other as Nintendo favorites such as Donkey Kong, Link, and Mario. The goal is simple: Knock opponents off platforms before they do the same to you. Skills are required to defend against attacks (with power-ups liberally scattered about), but Super Smosh is more action than denth.



iginally scheduled for December 3, at press time we ed Eternal Darkness' release was pushed back two ne first GamuCube title torgeted at a mature audience ernal Darkness attempts to provide some of the sophisticated schological horror of The Shining, but not without some of the ck-n-shish action of Fridoy the 13th. Nintendo wants to prove it





ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002

In last time Acciaim put its baseball franchise on a Nietendo console, it is was good enough to earn a fore-order review (see MG 55). Baseball games are an acquired taste, but if you're a fan of America's favorite pastime, you'll want to look at ASSO00, Beeides the batter's choice or 'flower' or 'contact' swings (better emulsting one of baseball's intrincicies), it's the only pro-baseball game currently amounced for GameCube.





ASB2002 plays well, but can it succeed if the High Heat or Triple Play franchises make their way onto Gome Fuha?

NHL HITZ

■ Publisher Midway ■ Developer Black Box ■ Pelesse Date November 18

If Sports-Center's hockey highlights were turned into a game, it would be Hitz. Sirilar to Midway's Blitz franchise, Hitz Offer over-the-top arcade hockey that highlights action and minimizes strategy. Hitz includes fighting, so opposing players will Guide it on the fice, somewhat like a simplistic Street Fighter. Don't expect realism, and you won't be disposited.





NHL Hitz adds to its rough-and-tumble arcade gameptay by integrating a fighting mode etween players (right) in this 3-on-3 hockey game

EXTREME G3

Publisher: Acclaim | Developer: Acclaim Cheltenham | Release Date, Nov. 18

memmber Wipcoutt Extreme G3 offers almost the same experience, d only this is a cycle-racing pame. The PS2 version looks and plays better than Sony's own Kheitoo, providing frenetic racing and beautiful environments. While it's basically a racer gamers should find Extreme G3's sense of speed a worthy substudie for the lack of any FZero title.





III The single-player mode is solid, but unless you've got a huge television, the multiplayer mode splits the screen too much to stay on top of the tight turns



PIKMIN

December 3
Miyamoto's take on the

puts the player in charge of "Blomis," small garden grown aliens. The gampely is part Commond and Conquer and part. Sheep Players must correctly direct their Blomin to accompake tack, whether their is to attack enemies or carry objects. With so many small characters moving around on screen, it's fairly complex (reads slow) game — one that will certainly leave Gamechel's buttern-machers ouzzied.



"Let's play a quick game of Pikmin" is something unlikely to be beard about Nintendo's uncoming strategy game.





TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

If you've liked the first two games of this fran-chise (and there's a whole lot of you out there), you won't be disappointed with this game (see PS2 review, page 94). It's now easier to string tricks together, which only adds to Tony Howk's already addictive gameplay





1453 X 3

CRAZY TAXI

It's Crazy Toxi! On GameCube! Not much different from the PS2 version! OK, we're losing some momentum here, Crazy Tox's frenetic. arcade gameplay would've been perfect to debut on GameCube, but this is a two-year-old arcade game, Still, if you haven't played it, it was one of Dreamcast's best games.



DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2



striking resemblance to the gold standard in extreme sports, Tony Howk's Pro Skoter, but still takes second place. The PS2 version earned four stars (see review, page 100), so keep an eye out for Dove If

Let's just say it: Dave Mirro 2 offers gameplay that bears a

you're more a BMX fan than skater.

FIFA 2002: ROAD TO THE FIFA WORLD CUP

FIFA's easy-to-use control scheme provides a simple yet effective way to shoot. pass, and move, it's more sim-like than Sega's forthcoming Virtuo Striker 3, which offers faster gameplay. The graphics are quite pretty, but FIFA may appeal only to soccer fans because of the low scoring and slower pace.



MADDEN NFL 2002



Modden's such a good football game as of late that the development teams struggle with ways to Improve it. Updated teams and rosters, prettier graphics, and more complex plays are a given. Reason enough to buy It? Maybe, But each new version refreshes the football experience, and this one is no different.

A quick look at GameCube titles coming down the road

Get hehind the wheel of a his ris in Acclaim's port of Sega's arcade hit.

Batmar: Dark Tomorrow; 2002 Not much a known about the tide of Comics-written storoline fruitures The loker Killer Croc, and Poson by

Bomberman Generation; 2002 Somberman misms in the cel-shaded action game. Gameplay appears to be a mix of Pokemon-style quests and trade-Crash Bandicoot: The Cortex Summer 2002

rweller's Takes takes on the develop nt duties in the latest incamation of this 3D action platformer, adding playsble. character Cocoa, Crash's states

Cubes Spring 2002 Based on the CG-cartoon that 300 is also using for its GBC robot-racing title. Bits Studio is developing this first person shooter set a few years after Die Hord-

With a Vergreence Donkey Kong Racing 2002 Rare's sequel to Diddy Kong Roding has you race through the jungle on animals, feeding them so they can grow into

Duke Nukem Forever TBA 3D Realms' upcoming first person shooter — ported from PC — features Duke's traditional macho action, plus the

ability to use vehicles novel Spring 2002 he role of Captain Rhama Sabrier in Confounding Factor

Kameo: Bensents of Power; 2002 Adventure game lets players capture and grow wild creatures to command, as well as possessing them to do battle Kae the Kangareo 2 2002 Nonvolent arcade-action title amed at kids follows the adventures of Kao as he

Kirby Tilt 'm' Tumble 2: Summer 2002 special cartridge turns your GBA into a controller for this GC title which plans much like Sega's Super Mankey Ball.

Legend of Zelds; 2002 Cel-staded Zeldoff People doubled Paper Morio until they placed R, so we're willow to eve it a chance tario Kart TRA Spect more of N64's Morio Kart, only

with better graphics. Mario Sunshines Winter 2002 You knew it was coming — Mario makes his latest platformer appearance. Probably one of the first system-sellers

Hetroid Prime: 2002 Ratro Studios' much publicized thirdperson - make that first-person adventure puts the player in the familiar role of Samus Aran

Mickeys TBA Yes, there is a Display Interactive, but no. they're not doing 6. That honor fails on. Capcom? Was the company that's bringing you Resident Bull is developing this upcoming platformer

ority Report Fall 2002 is known about this game other so-1 film of the same rame.

than that it is based upon the Spielberg Perfect Dark; TBA We know from it hard at work on this securi to the popular N64 shoots

Specific details are scarce, but we have high expectations nonetheless. Rave: The Groove Adventure: Full 2002 No, not a new rhythm game in Konam's Bernani series. It's actually an adventure the based on the japanese comic of the

Resident Svit Summer 2002 game has Shinji Mikam taking the helm.

Resident Svil 2: TBA Unike Resident Evil, this is just a straight port of the RaStation version.

Resident Sv8 % TBA Again, as with Resident Evil 2, a simple port of the original Resident Sv6 4 TBA Finally original content in the syries but

able to switch characters in the game relident Evil Code: Veronics TBA poom seems to be on cruise control

with another port. Resident Evil Zero: 2003 Proquel to the series players assume the role of Rebecca Chambers and unlock the mysteries of the Umbrella

Ricochet Ridic TBA 2002 Plot an altplane in this cartoonish action title from Titus GerneCube's first RFG that centers

GameCupes was now that General around a Modic The Gothering-layer card combat system. Sgt. Cruise: Summer 2002 Cartoonsh action game features cooper-

ative multiplayer mode. The Simpsons Road Rags: January 2002 This shameless Crozy Too done includes dislosus written by actual Simosons writers, Stiff fan -- now fannier

Somic Adventure 2: Spring 2002 Some things are simply made for each other, Sonic on GameCube should fit perfectly together.

Star Fox Adventures: Dinosaur Planet, Spring 2002 Originally stated for N64, Rare took almost the entire adventure game design and northylights GameCube. Tarzani TBA 2002

od on Disney's Torson, play as the title character as he tries to rescue animals from poachers.

Legends of Westling Spring 2002 Co old-school fighting as jula "The Snale," George "The Arkma" Steele, and Jimmy "Superity" Smike. nd Calibur 2: TEA 2002

for (see Cover Story page 64) WWF: Wrestlemanis TBA 2002 As, developer of the original game, is officially appropriated as the day team.

Animal Forest Plus 2002 Myamoto has greated a writini world where places can fish and engage in other activities such as teedle design and Interior decoration Really Tetatis Worlds: TBA 2002 It's yet another Retris.

Universal Studies: Spring 2002 Developed by Na's Digital Works, this game houses several min-games based WaterWorld attractions

Jonemy McGrath Supercross Wo Spring 2002 Acclaim's Salt Lake City studio brings the learny McGroth supercross social barchise to GameCube

Gold Star Mountain; 2002 Raise animals then train them in this action RPG from From Software antany Star Online; Spring 2002 sistent-world RPG from Sonic Team boks and plays like the Dreamcast

GC's modern adaptive

Doshin the Glant 2002 before there was Block & lock & White, there was Dorobin on 64000, interest with elianers via Doshin and win over their

1080" Snowboarding 2 2002 Networks wouldoord more exmorr earned five stars in its N64 terration, so expect good three from its rept-een cousin

ego Backetball 2002 January Visual Concepts brings its basketball expertise to the college level Elittle League Basebalt 2002 Not much is known about this title, other than that it's coming from NewYoCo,

which means it's not meant for you. MBA 2KZ Spring 2002 Segris NBA title moves to GameCubo with more of its five-on-the NSA action, although it's not known whether online play will be present

NBA Courtside 2002 January 2002 Developer Left Field delivers Nintendo's own entry into the basestial category with new passing controls

Virtus Striker 3 v. 2002 January 2002 Sim-style sports games aren't for even-one, and AMD has the arcade sports fan in mend with its latest offeren.













HOW DO THEY STACK UP?

Next Gen helps you find the console winner this holiday season

CONSOLE GAMECUBE

HARDWARE

CONTROLLER DESIGN CURRENT GAMES

Although GameCube may lack raw horsepower, Nintendo has created a cost-effective, efficiently designed place of hardware. The games look great out of the gate, but developers may be stifled by the system's technical limitations later in its lifecycle.

It features a beautiful, erronomic design, although it's one that seems Inflexible for certain non-Nintendo genres - specifically fighting. A step forward ponetheless.

ENextGen★★★★☆

Having IS games out before the holiday sounds a lot better than the measly three available in Japan, but the only bona fide system-seller appears to be Rogue Squodron II. The first-party games are good, but they're not obviously worthy of the initial \$199 investment.

XBOX

ENextGen ★★★☆☆ A monster truck of power under

Those with larger hands may really like this controller, but the button size and placement compromises the design. Microsoft should offer a smaller version devoid of the huge card ports.

ENextGen ★★★☆☆ As with GameCube, there are several solid games arriving before the holidays, but only Holo and Dead or Alive 3 are worth a 6 a m.

the hood - not surprising given its sheer bulkiness. When Microsoft announced Xbox's tech specs. many believed it was too conser-

vative in its projection of what would still be a high-performance game machine. They were wrong. E NextGen ****

E NextGen ★★☆☆☆

wait outside Electronics Boutique. ENextGen★★★☆☆



PlayStation 2 is no longer the fanciest entry in the market. Although not the powerplant that is Xbox, it still has a lot to offer, especially as developers become more familiar with its intricacies.

Hard to fault something that 80 million people bought into the first time. Whether the Dual Shock 2's analog buttons ever amount to anything remains to be seen.

Four words: Metal Geor Solid 2. Add Devil May Cry. GT3, and loke ond Doxter, all of which are or should be at least four-star game available only on PS2 this year, and you can't go wrong.

ENextGen ****

ENextGen ★★★★☆ PS2 AND GAMECUBE

EMextGen ***** PLAYSTATION 2



Microsoft has surprised many by not pumping out marginal titles (no igoriest) in its first wave of games like Sony did with PS2. A lot of that can be attributed to the hardware, which opens several doors for developers. And today's games are only using a fraction of Xbox performance.

A tie between PS2 and GameCube. where it becomes more a matter of personal preference.



PS2's second-generation games have the advantage of being compared to GameCube and Xbox first-generation games - an edge PS2 earned by beating them to market. There will be around 150 PS2 games available this fall, including exclusive third-party games such as MGS2 and Devil May Cry.

THE MAKING OF GAMEGURE

e-set level. So for example, working with wata-san, he'd say, "Hey, it'd be nice if you could do the following three things - we could do same wonderful things in earnes."

NG: Were there other developer concerns taken into consideration?

GB: We tried to make their development as cheap as possible. The cheaper their development is, the more money they're going to make, the more they want to write for this platform, the more games that are out there that are good games, the better we are all going to do. How much Microsoft did that, I'd question,

they create the DXs of the world is not driven by the developers, at least from our experience

NG: Nvidia swallowed 3dfx and is now the dedo you see them as a con

GB: What we hear back from developers is that across the board people are very, very happy with GameCube, and less than happy with Xbox. I think of that platform as a subsidized PC, but it's not going to have the performance of a PC. It's going to have much, much worse performance compared to putting something

like our Radeon 8500 or a GeForce out in a standard PC

NG: Is writing for GameCube the same as

riting to OpenGL? GB: A lot of it's just a way of thinking. There's sort of a model of how you overlay the software onto hardware, and how you overlag the need to get to hardware, if you look at the DX releases, they tend to be an API for the sake of hardware - so we're able to make things a lot cheaper than having to write for DX8. We created this API from scratch with the sole purpose of same development: OpenGL was

UPCOMING GAMES

Many Nintendo sames would make Next Gen's All-Time Greats list, and there's a lot of potential with the new Morio, Zeldo, and Metroid vames. Nintendo's exclusive deal on all Resident Evil games shows that the company is being aggressive in

tying up big games to its system. ■ NextGen ★★★★☆

Will third-party companies commit AAA franchises like Virtuo Fighter to Xbox? Soul Colibur is a step in the right direction, but third parties seem hesitant to jump on board until Xbox proves itself - and firstparty games aren't up to the Miyamoto standard.

ENextGen★★★☆☆

Now these are the games we've been waiting for! Titles such as Moximo, Virtuo Fighter 4, Finol Fontosy X and XI (as well as some secret games that Next Gen will be unveiling in the next few issues) will be must-haves - and those are just the games coming out in the spring.

E Next Gen + + + + +

PLAYSTATION 2 It'll be hard for Nintendo and Microsoft to sign exclusive games because of PlayStation 2's Installed base; there's just too much money to be made for a publisher not to also make a PS2 version. Still, many developers aren't fond of the hardware and have moved on to Xbox and GameCube.

MARKETING MUSCLE

Among the masses, Nintendo is synonymous with videosames. The company's main challenge is attracting the older gaming market that Sony has cultivated during the last few years, and Nintendo is working to do just that with promotions and events like its touring Cube Club.

ENextGen★★★☆☆

We've heard of Xhox branding problems and wonder if the world will ever equate Microsoft with anything other than productivity software. We're still waiting for signs that Microsoft is spending its \$500million marketing budget. Plans for 10,000 Xbox kiosks are a good start.

ENextGen ★★☆☆☆

With over IS TV campaigns for Individual games airing on cable and network shows, promotional partnerships with Pepsl, Hershey's, etc., and advertisements in gaming, music, and entertainment pubs, it looks like Sony has its act together since that awful "PS9" deback.

ENextGen **** PLAYSTATION 2

What's the most effective way to reach gamers? Highlight the games they want to play - which is exactly what Sony is doing with farreaching TV ads. And by choosing PlayStation 2 as its console name, Sony also avoided the challenge of re-branding its newest system.

BUY THIS CONSOLE IF YOU...

...Eat., bre athe. and sleep Nintendo, or want the best Star Wars game available this year. And at \$200, It could actually become your second console





...Like to bet on the underdor. want Holo or DOA3, and technology that looks good for the long

...Want the absolutely best variety of action games this holiday season — and a DVD player to hoot



While all of these categories impact the success of a console, it's still all about the games - and that's why Sony is this year's winner. Nintendo and Microsoft will need to keep working at breakneck speeds if they want to catch PlayStation 2. But If they can sign system-selling exclusive games, help their developers quickly maximize their consoles' performance, and successfully drum up consumer support, It'll be a whole new ball-ame next year. NextGen

because you don't need to tweak things around to get performance out of the machine, and some of the guys really love doing that.

expect the games to get better over the life of

GB: N64 was a new model for a lot of the developers, going from 2D worlds to 3D worlds With GameCube it's a double-edge sword, being able to get performance right out the

hute really easily without twiodling a bunch of egisters. It may appear like you're not going to get better games down the road, but there's a rich feature set that I don't think everyone is

NG: What are GameOube's graphical GB: It's got incredibly flexible, high-perfor

multi-texturing capabilities. We've get some vary nice ways of blending and combining nextures to get different effects. Textures car affect other textures, which allows you to do things like proper bump-mapping

NG: What's your role been with Nintendo now that the chip has been designed? GB: Over the last year, we've been working with VEC, on getting to production and getting production quality up. We'll probably be working with NEC in the foreseeable future [to try to reduce cost]. Over time, you've seen maching to firom \$199 to \$149, \$129, and \$99 — it's moortant to keep dropping the cost

NG: Do you foresee your partnership going forward with Nintendo on any machine

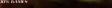
We certainly hope so. [Nintendo] maintains partnerships as long as their partners are living up to what they need. I think we've gone beyond what they've needed, and I think the having the chance to do the next one, we've got

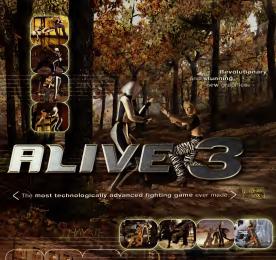
to be high on the list.

...on the other side.















THE WORLD NEEDS A HERO AND THERE IS ONLY ONE MAN FOR THE JOB.









James Bond OO7" in AGENT UNDER FIRE"



en all-now ACTIONI-PACKED ADVENTURE. Designed specifically for the PlayStation "2. Innuerse processil in 12 PULSE-POUNDING MISSIONIS legge FIRST-PERSON ACTION. Greatissian DRIVING LEVELS in renic speciases, including the ASTON MARTIN" DBS, BANN" 750il and BAW? 28. Employ state-of the-ant GAUGETS, Welld HI-TECH WEAPONRY. Newt STUNNING BOND GIRLS, Jassings to Exotic LOCATIONS acress the abob. Firm your finance is FOUR-PLAYER SPLIT-SCREEN action. The most governiby of BONO has animal.



⇒Finals

We've got our first-ever Xbox reviews, but the big news turns out to be the return of The Hawk — go figure



Xbox		
4 Evo 2		
ASCAR Hea		91





With up to four players able to connect multaneously, the online aspect adds a



o as to enable expert players to build rick strings that easily exceed a million ofnta and close to 100 multipliers

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Truly orgasmic gaming

TO SECOND TO SECOND SEC

If we've learned one thing about the game industry in the new millennium, it's that we should never underestimate. Neversoft's ability to evolve the Tony Howk series. As much as Pro-Skotler 2 improved on the original — some consider it the best game ever created for the original PayStation — THES3 makes seen more similarity makes seen more similarity.

strides. And like its predecessor, THPS3 outshines every title in PS2's current librars.

PSZ's current library.
THPSZ's most impressive refinements come in its level design and gameplay. Neversoft has packed each of the gigantic levels till of secret items, hidden areas, and challenging objectives. Furthermore, players will find each level till of activity and very interactive. Skate parks such as USA Angelos Feature endices

amounts of traffic, people

walking about, and even earthquakes and shootouts. Most importantly, Neversoft's conspiuously elite design ability has creaked some of the most challenging, yet most rewarding levels even conceived in a skatubo-ardleng garne. Once you master a particular park, trick strings exceeding a million points are

In terms of gameplay, THPS3 will remain familiar to fans, but with some very welcome new

PlayStation 2

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 Arrtic Thunder Batman Vengeance Crash Bandicoot: Wrath of Cortex Oave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2 ... Extreme G3 Racing Mark Life Harvest Monte Sun the Mondard Kinetica... The Legend of Alon O'ar Monster Rancher 3 NHL 2002



105 Dreamcast 108 Oeath Crimson OX

106

108

.108

Ooga Booga ... Reel Fishing/Wild... Sega Bass Fishing 2..... tion, creating an even deeper



EPC

Red Faction Throne of Dar Ultimate Ride

The Rating system

Since we're living in a time when even age games are pretty good, we at t Generation will continue to and even better. Note that a threestar rating is a typical "good" game, so expect to see a lot of them.

***** REVOLUTIONARY

**** GOOD THEORY FAIR

*0000 BAD

Denotes a review of a Japanese product



Victorious Bowers

twists. Besides obviously adding new tricks like the bilarious lackass grab and Handstand manual and grind, Neversoft has enhanced the engine with new types of tricks such as Reverts. These enable players to execute a 180-degree out-of-ramp jump, which can then be connected to a manual; from there, the player can continue to grind rails or Ollie more ramps, effectively stringing the entire trick toge This translates into larger tricks limited less by the game's engine and more by your own imaginagameplay experience. Of course, none of these gameplay mechanics would ter without precise controls, and THPS3's controls are seamless: Executing various tricks in long and complicated strings never poses any problems. This is certainly due to even tig game code, but also to the fact that everything runs at a silkymooth 60fps with crisp, clear

have grown accustomed have also been updated. The Create-A Skater and Park Editor modes feature many more options. undoubtedly thanks to PS2's increased memory and storage. This means that you can design even larger, more elaborate level and create a wider variety of characters - even Abe Lincoln parts are avail

The other extras to which fans

characters and levels.

Although the two-player mode remains essentially the same, it now seems insignificant in the face of THPS3's newest, most



Important feature: online playa-

ty. The online aspect enal four players to compete against each other simultaneously in a variety of games such as King of the Hill, Graffiti, and Trick Point competitions. We can only hope that Internet rankings, clans, and urnaments will folk

THPS3 suffers from no serious faults, although the soundtrack is arguably weaker than previous entries. There's a wide variety of songs - hip-hop, rock, and punk — to satisfy a wide variety of tastes, but this also means that tastes, but any mass measure and the everyone will have a track or two they hate. Fortunately, there's also an option that enables you to deactivate any song.

In any case, this in no way

of the other games in the series

(and if you haven't, how dare you call yourself hardcore?), you owe it to yourself to pick up a copy of

diminishes the game's overall this gem, immediately - Chester Borber quality. If you've never played any

PARK IT! The interface and controls for the Park Editor and

Create-A-Skater modes, thankfully, remain the same, making it very simple (albeit time-consuming) to build levels and skaters. Since players now have access to a wider variety of parts, more elab-orate layouts are now possible. We're hoping that, with internet access now available on PS2, as with

PCs, players will be able to upload and share new levels and skaters with the re of the THPS3 community. If that is the case, this game's replayability goes to II.





Combined with the replay option, you can create very dynamic camera angles

ENextGen * * * * * Bottom Line: PS2's most impressive game to date. Not just

perfectly balanced - THPS3 offers enough new elements to warrant the coveted fifth star reserved for revolutionary titles

EFinals ×



Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2X

Not too little, but a little too late finely tuned as ever, but

The title of this special edition is from the PlayStation game there's actually a lot of extra content as well. For starters, all of the levels from the original THPS are unlockable, as well as five new ones - effectively doubling (or more) the size of the game. On top of that, of course, the graphics have been thorprovide Xbox users with a

Still, it's not quite enough. As a collector's edition this is a protty amazing deal, but since outdated by THPS3 (see review, page 94), this just feels old. The control is as

visual feast that's up to the

level of their new high-end

next to the latest installment, it actually feels a lly do make that mu volumetric grass(), they still seem rather soarse compared to the intera tive levels of THPS3. It really does feel like an

While all the Tony Howk games have earned five stars so far, and this is really just a compile we still can't justify the purchase if you've already ryed through the first vo games on some other m. The new levels are od, but they aren't thot - Bloke Fischer

older game that has simply

been prettied-up



ENextGen★★★★☆

Bottom Line: If you've got an Xbox and need ne Hawk action, this is a great value. But if I've already played the first two games, pick up THPS3 on PS2 (or just wait for it to show up on Xbox).

4x4 Evo 2

■ Developer: Terminal Reality The onergi 464 Evo bounced from platform to platform, but maintained most of its core qualities wherever it wound up. This sequel adds a few new features, but mostly plows on in the same year Simply put, that's a mixed blessing

Evo 2 features dozens of 4x4s by manufacturers from Dodge to Lexus, and includes a baption diffreet actional parts to unerarie each one. In addition to the racing circuits, there's also a new Mission mode that enables you to earn big bucks pretty quickly. Most missions boll down to Start at Point A and find versiely indicated Point B.* but there are a few Smuggler's Runstyle restaurant as well All these additions are well and good, but everything that was

amoving about the original is still

pretty annoying here. Namely the



driving around the surface of the

moon than driving off-road on Earth, and collisions result in little more than a thump and coming to a dead stop. Perhaps not coincidentally, opponent AI seems to consist mostly of the other drivers trying to run into your vehicle as often as possible

Lastly, while there are several different kinds of terrain there's still an odd sort of sameness about every location. Mostly, 4x4 Eyn 2 is - left Lindrian

floaty physics model feets more that build fast NextGen★★☆☆☆

Bottom Line: A case of too many options and not enough gameplay to back it up.

NASCAR Heat 2002

III Platform: Xbox III Publisher: II Developer: Monster Games, No sense minong words, NASCAR Heat 2002 is one of the most competting NASCAR games we've ever played. This is thanks largely to the 36 separate "Boat the Heat" challenges, which are a great way to introduce the sport to newbes. while enabling experienced stock

car racers to polish their skills. There's also a taxing 'Boxt the Pro* selection, wherein you race against ghost cars "driven" by real NASCAR drivers The Carrer mode is well thought-out and enables you to compete for Winston Cup supremacy. The only problem is that NASCAR Heat only has 19 of

the 23 official Winston Cup tracks, making it less than a spot-on sim. Graphically though, the game is very close to spot-on. The tracks look nearly identical to their realworld counterparts and the cars are all pivoly detailed. The Yhov version, however, does not look significantly better than the one on



PS2, although it certainly does sound better, Dolby Digital S.I.

support means that wewing the game from the driver's perspective is about as close as any of us will ever come to actually driving in a NASCAR race There are two different difficulty

settings, but even in the normal mode we were frustrated by the Alls unforgiving catch-up logic Nonetheless, NASCAR Heat's compelling challenges and absorbing graphics makes this racer another respectable addition to the Xbox launch list. - Im Preston

NextGen★★★★☆

Bottom Line: It won't convert non-NASCAR nuts, but casual and hardcore stock car fans would be wise to pick it up.







There are worse things than missing the game-winning free throw.

Like having to call your roommate "Daddy" for a week.







connecte with precise pick-n-roll plays.



Put down apponents with a variety of zone defense









PlayStation.2





TO CONTROL OF THE PROPERTY OF

-Finals 4 **■ PLAYSTATION 2**

ave Mirra estvle

The good extreme



bit. You've no doubt eye screenshot, seen that this is a sequel to yet another "Xtreme"

What sets Dove Mirro apart from the other Tony Howk wannabes is a truly rich stunt system. Although the basic three-button trick/grind/grab model is by now a genre standard, here you can mix all three together. So it is possible for example, to modify a backflip with a no-hander and then land into a manual modified by a one-footer. There are over 1500 different tricks possible in this game, and it never gets boring trying to find

The original Dave Mirro part due to a lack of variety. The sequel adds eight truly

ENextGen ★★★★☆

Bottom Line: Tons o' tricks; gigantic, engaging levels; a park editor; and excellent challenges. What more do you need?

Batman Vengeance

One nice thing about Bottom Vanoconce is that it faithfully captures the retro aesthetic of the excellent animated series it's based on, and its many cut scenes are highly entertaining. However the slossy surface

hides a darker heart First off controlling Batman and his Bat-gadgets requires a pretty complex scheme. It boos back and forth between first- and third-person modes. and together with the lessthan-precise analog control (the double sump, in particular, seems to require almost

random timine), too often the result is a worn try/dic/repeat

model of gameplay That said, there's a lot of variety with frequent stages in which you fir the Batplane. solve losse puzzles, and so on, along with a few unique, interesting challenges here and there. However, these intriguing

elements can only offset, and

not make up for the often frus-



trating gameplay it's entertain ng, but needed a lot more tweaking - leff Lundrigon ■ Next Gen ★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: While it has a number of things going for it, Batman Vengeance still comes up short in a few key areas.

Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath of Cortex

Doveloper: Traveller's Tales The bandlooot's first foray on PS2 quebt to have been great news. However, if you were expecting anothing different prepare to be disappointed. On the other hand, if you wanted a lot more of the same - well it's still disappointing

To wit, the gamepley hasn't changed one jot since Crosh 2. The bulk of this is still old-style platform challeness number on a track (a 3D track, but still a track), broken up by levels in which Crash pilots different vehicles like a hel-pak or gides and at one point even a farly goofy mech. Obwously millions of folks have bought into this

style of gameplay and enjoyed it, so perhaps you can't fault them for list moreone what's been successful in the nast But even so, there are

losars hom. Malely (and we seem to be saying this a lot books at and runt that well tuned or balanced, including some collision detection etiches and many badly chosen camera angles. Worst of all the load times are horrendous. There're tried covering



it up by adding a "falling Crash" mini-come in between stages.

but it's very mortifive and quickly grows tedious. However Crosh fires should certainly get their fx. The emphics are solid and colorful and the gameplay is exactly

what you've come to expect. Wir'll last leven booker for - leff Lundrigge

NextGen ★★☆☆☆

Bottom Line: Even with the relatively low bar of just offering more of the same, this still comes un kinda short.

Arctic Thunder

When Hydro Thursder appeared as a bunch title for Decompost it was a beautiful and very playable arcade racer it's rather summising then, that two years later, its spiritual sequel is in every way inferior

ten smax lots of interesting

challenges, and an excellent

and hyperextended knees

with a single rider is challenge

enough, but with H different

same, Unfortunately, the

graphics are just this side of

touches to appeal to the eye.

review isn't it? You thought this

was another boring same-old.

and now you've missed out

ore, with few interesting

- Jim Preston

pros to pick from, it could take

park editor that lets you create

your own land of broken chins

Completing every single task

The concept is basically the same: You take control of a very fast vehicle (in this case, a snowmobile), fly through unusual fantasy environments, collect power-ups, get to the finish line, rinse, and repeat. Arctic Thunder features more combat than

its Hydro cousin, but has no more depth because of it. The power-ups are actually too plentiful, so combat consists mostly of lamming or the fire button. The graphics are sub-Dreamcast, and while all the tracks include hidden paths, the interesting architecture and leaps over lava and nuclear waste aren't enough to prop up an ordinary expe-



rience that's as routine as a

metronome. - Am Preston

NextGen ★★☆☆☆

Bottom Line: There's plenty of "Arctic," but little "Thunder," But then, we suppose Snow Snooze wouldn't have been as catchy.

FOR GAME BOY ADVANCE



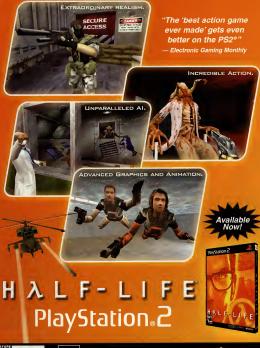


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If it gets too insane, eject











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NOTE OF THE SECTION THE EXPLOSIONANCE OF SURVAINT CORPORATION. COTTEST SECTION SECTION IN EXECUTION SURVAINT SURVAINTS OF THE SECTION OF THE INTERNATION OF THE INTER



Ill Extreme G3 Racing won't win too many points for originality, but that doesn't mean it sin't fun

Extreme G3 Rocing is the conveys a satisfying sensation of breakneck speed. It's not a quantum leap over other sci-fi genres, the futuristic hyperscreamers like Rollcoop, Stor speed racer. A couple of centuries from now low-slung motorcycles capable of 600 moh are the vehicles of choice Extreme G3's primary roal seems to be giving you the impression that you are going very, very fast indeed, and it carr't be faulted in this regard

Thanks to a low camera angle, some very slick track signs (10 in all), and little visible draw-in, the game



ElMextGen ★★★☆☆

Wors Rocer, and the granddaddy of them all. Wiprout. but it moves right along Uperadeable blke systems and weapons (which, predictably can be bought and

sold at the in-same mail with the cash you earn from races). cool track desires, and a pleasing variety of game modes and leagues (including a neat cooperative two-player Career mode) will keep genre

cts happy. Unlocking the advanced racing teams will also keep you busy — at least until the next rame like this comes out - and on the whole, this definitely delivers the rush speed freaks craws

Still many of us wonder ow a sub-genre in which each new game looks and feels largely the same as the last can ntinue to keep people inter-- Gory Whitto

Bottom Line: Though it brings nothing substantially original to the party, this is a solid, slick-feeling plaything for fans of Wipeout-style racers.

Half-Life

is a port of a three-year-old game. We liked it answay Sue us. Holf-Life's claim to fame was that it added a story line that mattered and a modicum of character interaction to firstnemon shooters. Obviously this has been close many times. since then on both PC and

consoles, with Red Faction being a recent PS2 example. However, this is an exceptionally nice port. Concerns about unsteady framerates have turned out to be largely unfounded; on rare occasions it does chug sightly for a brief second, but only very rarely it

■ Platform: PlayStation 2 ■ Publisher: Sierra ■ Developer: Gearbox Software/V uses a dual analog control scheme that works as well as any console FPS it also adds a lock-on button that keeps you onented on a chosen target no

Last deathmatch and coopera-

tive multiplayer modes add a

Holf-I de wor't set the

bit of molevanium

matter how you move, which is both a blessing and a curse - there's definitely a learning curve to figuring out how to use it best - but it remains an interesting and useful wrinkle.

is still pretty cool

PLAYSTATION 2 Finals

current console world on fire hist if you want to see what all the fuss was about, this is an excellent, enjoyable chance to find out. - jeff Lundrigon

■ NextGen ★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: It may be getting old, but there's still a surprising amount of life in Half-Life.

Harvest Moon: Save the Homeland

■ Developer: Victor Interset

The premise of this chemning. unique game sounds patently lutilonus It's a familie RPG in which you must save your late epandoa's form by emwine crops, raising lyestock, selling herbs, or working at the stables. While all this sounds protty menial (mostly because it to, there's a lot of Sims-like strategy in deciding sist how to spend each day flus it's oddy satisfying to see an empty farm slowly fill with tomatoes, com,

cows, and chickens.

action with a colorful cast of NPCs that draws the story -courting a wife and saving the fown from being buildozed to make way for an amusement park. There are nine ways to do this from winning a baking contest to catching a rare butterfly depending on how you

■ NextGen ★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: A wonderfully charismatic, unique title that every gamer should play, though your mileage will vary with your patience



this babe want you? treat certain characters. In the

and the slow pace and manual labor will almost certainly wear you down before you see all nine endines, but the first couple of ro-munds are well worth £ - Eric Brotcher

Kinetica ■ Platform PlayStation 2 ■ Publisher: Sony ■ Developer: So

Much like Extreme G3, Kinetica elevation. There are feeting hardly minumets the wheel it moments when you'll have too is all about blazing ultraabsolutely no idea where you high-speed trais around spaceare or what just happened age tracks while transy house before eventually realizing that music pumps away But it does acid a few things to help shour off that "movied" feel Chief. amone these is an extremely liberal definition of the concept of a racetrack, as Kinetico's speed jockeys don't just burn real breath of fresh air rubber on the road, but the

The sprawling tracks often split off into multiple levels and incorporate breathtaking freefalls and steep changes in

It's impossible to really wipe out or frome off the track it takes a bit of setting used to but the freewheeling sensation that comes with some of the more adventurous tracks is a its only real minus point is a wells, ceilings, and virtually stylistic one, in that the vehicles every other surface.

Kinetico comes out he than the sum of its parts are not stortly bioes non cars.

but bizzers bybrids that look Mir Transformers miects There's a cool variety of them and they do have some charactor; but ultimately they are, frankly, a bit silly and take the - Gary Whitto

NextGen ★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: An intriguing twist on a largely played-out genre, aithough the Autobots-style racers might turn some gamers off.



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MAX PAYNE IS A MAN WITH NOTHING TO LOSE IN THE VIOLENT, COLD LIRBAN NIGHT. A FUGITIVE UNDERCOVER COP FRAMED FOR MUROER, AND NOW HUNTED BY COPS AND THE MOB. MAX IS A MAN WITH HIS BACK AGAINST THE WALL, FIGHTING A BATTLE HE CANNOT HOPE TO WIN. PREPARE FOR A NEW BREED OF DEEP ACTION GAME, PREPARE FOR PAIN...

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AX PAYNET IS A TITLE YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST HOT MISS IF YOU'RE AN ACTION CAMER." - IGN



VIOLENCE





















BULLET TIME" LETS THE PLAYER USE SLOW MOTION GAMEPLAY TO BRING DOWN ENEMIES



SELF ABJUSTING DIFFIGULTY KEEPS YOU



Max PAYNE

AVAILABLE ON

DC.

PlayStation 2



defense players to block shots

your defense still has little idea

It's possible to turn down

the passing accuracy and turn

adjust one of the four difficulty

deliberate, defensive-oriented

hockey. Casual and arcade fans.

however, will be thrilled at the

ter face mapping, and cool

obligatory graphical updates,

new NHL Hero, Celebration,

and Easter Egg cards, which

have to be unlocked by com-

ting preset hockey chal-

more playability to the same

standard feature from now on.

Again, the defensive play could

use some work, but NHL 2002.

every year, is still the only same

- Aim Preston

like EA Sports' hockey effort

and will hopefully be a

lenges. It's a great way to bring

The biggest add tion are the

sins that it's difficult to play

up the interceptions, or even

settings. Yet the simple fact

w to clear the crease or shut

and passes is utterly futile, as

the back door

Finals 4

II EA Sports' NHL series remains (one again) the clear leader in pro hockey → W103 AP-IL 2002, EA Sports once again creates a superb videogame with fantastic graphics, animation, and sentation. Although it ranks just four stars this year, its only real competition comes from previous incarnations of itself NHI 2000 featured the welcome addition of sliders that enabled you to tailor the gameplay and physics to suit your tastes. Thankfully most of those siders have been retained for this year's effort. but sadly so has the poor

nsive Al. In fact, relying on



ENextGen ★★★★☆

Bottom Line: Only frustrating defensive controls man another brilliant effort from EA Sports.

Monster Rancher 3

the original Monster Rancher. in which players used music CDs to unlock pet monsters. then raised and coached them in stadiational combat, was an

addictive, one-of-e-kind title. earning five stars back in NG 38 The series now continues on PS2, with cel-shaded graphics, many more monsters. and deeper creature/trainer interaction in fact, Monster Rancher 3 hews so closely to the now four-year-old formula. it's disappointing.

it's odd, given the incredible vision of the original game, but even with a slightly reworked

Back in the pre-Pokémon days, monster mutation/combination system and a Pokémon

Stoclium-style Versus mode there are no truly new or fresh steas here if they had added the ability to raise multiple creatures simultaneously, for ristance, it would have opened up new possibilities like team battles and monster-monster retaconships, instead, it's all just more of the same Make no mistake This



pace remains a bit slow), but there's still too much untacoed potential here. - Eric Brotcher

game is every bit as absorbing NextGen ★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: A unique, absorbing game that needs to expand its vision in order to live up to its revolutionary roots.

The Legend of Alon D'ar

Few things are more tedious than a "sprawling" RPG without any mai wit, style, or ensures characters But Alon D'or is suit such a beast The graphics are solid and

show some vanetx all without making any real impression. The character and production designs likewise flesh things out without being memorable. The larger Ideas (conflicts among the game's half-dozen races.

dialogue and story often hint at for example) then sort of shandon them. The only nor generic element is that, as in Secret of Mana, up to two

players can control the fourmember main party Otherwise combut consists of the usual semi-resitime.

Swart on your attack meter to count down' formula Subquests pop up like weeds, but a depressing number of them consist of scavenger hunts to find the 30 Amber Beads (or Silver Acoms, Medicinal Tree Progs, ad reuseum) that are lit-



in the end, very little about the rest of this same is any less

erally lust lying around of a chore. - leff Lundriggn

NextGen★★☆☆☆

Bottom Line: As middle-of-the-road an RPG as they come - frequently plodding, only sporadically enjoyable, and almost instantly forgettable.

Victorious Boxers

Victorious Boxers puts you in the role of publistic hopeful lopo Makunouchi on a quest to win the Featherweight belt. The boxing is fast, with both arcade and sim elements, requiring some of the technique and patience of the real sport but with a much quicker pace. Traditional RPG-like stat management has been dropped in favor of in-same chematics in the styling of Rocky

At first, the controls are a problem: The analog stick handles both ducking and 3D movement, which is awknowed until you reconfigure it in the appare menu However while

■ Platform: PlayStation 2 ■ Publisher: Empire Interactive ■ Dov the controls can be mastered. the camera ande is occasional-Ir less than useful The graphics are decent the framerate is good, and there's some finitiss tic knock-down animations

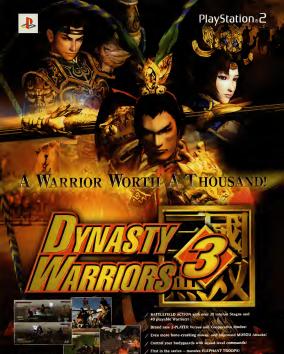
As you defeat each of the 43 boxers in Story mode there are also three other main characters to play - they become playable in the Versus mode, affering solid replay value While mansa-style char-

KnockOut Kings, this game does a better job capturing the speed and drama of the sport. - Torn Russo

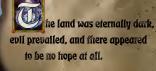


Bottom Line: It's arouably the best 3D boxing game yet, but with a few odd quirks and fictitious characters, its appeal may be limited.

108 NextGen 12/01 www.next-generation.com



(CO.E.)



And as if that wasn't enough, the young wizard had aged 30 years in a day and a pack of wild hell hounds was trying to devour him. He used his orb and a lava spell to torch the wretched beasts and ran for his life. He continues on his quest to become a master sorcerer, but he still has nowhere near the 45 spells he needs to defeat the darkness.

Not even near the end







→ Finals @ **■ DREAMCAST**

oda oda

Booga on, dude



If There's something to be said for re smacking other players with witch d

with a variety of magic spells

Survivor with a big dose of

Super Smash Bros. thrown in

Ooga Booga's action often

appears manic and random as

tion. But there's a fair amount of skill involved, and while the

most fun is to be had with

friends in multiplayer Party

a decent fight as well. The

mode, the computer Al puts up

whole thing is wrapped up in a

charming Tiki-style atmosphere

with cute characterizations for

all four witch doctors, and a

soundtrack of catchy samba-

style tunes that you'll quickly

find yourself bopping along to.

going to set the gaming world

on fire, but it does have the

makings of a sleeper hit, and

can get two or more people

it's a surefire blast any time you

around the TV. - Gory Whitte

All in all, Ooga Booga's not

It's Looney Tunes meets

There's a kind of appre hension and mild dread that creeps over a reviewer when handed a game called Coga Booga. The name doesn't exactly inspire confidence, nor racky" Tiki-masked character on the Jewel case, conjuring thoughts of yet another little known, lower-tier title destined for a quick death at retail and an unmarked grave

Which really just goes to show how misleading first impressions can be, because while Oogo Soogo is unlikely to bring Dreamcast back from certain death, there's actually something to be said for its Primarily, it's fun. it's a deceptively simple, arcade-style party game that casts up to four participants (either splitscreen or online) as cartoon witch doctors who like nothing more than to spend their days laying the smack down on each other

ElNextGen ★★★★☆

Bottom Line: A tasty slice of lightweight party fun that proves there's life in Dreamcast yet.

Sega Bass Fishing 2

Segulets one get away with its third Dreamcast fishing game, which finds the senes strussing to evolve into a sophisticated fishing sim. However, like the firms protagonists in larnes Cameron's 1981 Pronho It The Spowning, this creature doesn't guite belong

The areas are bases the fish smarter and the tackle box deeper This sounds great, but it isn't. Too much time is wasted trolling about in search of fish - ony fish - to ande. Once that's done, you'll discover that even the most sluttonous-looking specimens are apparently anorexic. Oh.

they'll track your lure intently for cast after east, but they won't actually bite until some too-arbitrary combination of weather time of day lure, and (probably) planetary alignment occurs. Then, once you stumble upon this mazical recipe, every bass within miles becomes ravenous until an

eight-ounce Crappie incopica-



g it? Expect to see a lot of that in this earne nicely the visual effects. textures, and control are less

bly snaps your line. Finally there is no Arcade mode, and while the fish are modeled oute NextGen ★★☆☆☆ alternately too hard or too easy.

Bottom Line: More realistic, but not more fun.

This is easily Sega's deepest fishing title, but it's

polished than in the two-yearold original. -- Eric Brotcher

Death Crimson OX

Desorte the current stut of run sames (Time Crisis & Stient Scope II. Confidential Mission). the genre remains stagnant. unable to offer home players any real innovation or longevity (and no, releasing Silent Scope sames without sun support does not count as innovation). White Death Crimson OK is a serviceable arcade title, it's just

another example of this trend, Perhaps the problem is the fundamental simplicity of pur games. This is basically House of the Dead 2 with enemies that don't break apart and some RoboCop-style visual

influences refreshingly blended into the zomble theme. There are a few nice touches: Your shots become more damaging when you near death: there's a "foll everything onscreen" smart bomb (oddly named the "deathrut"); and while the substitution of subtitles for socken dialogue was surely a cost-



Still, with only a smile path

through six quick levels, there's no way for us to recommend cutting measure, it spares you this to anyone but gun game - Eric Brotcher collectors

from bad voiceover work ■ NextGen ★★☆☆☆

Bottom Line: A typical gun game with typical gun game problems: It's too short, too redundant, and too similar to everything else out there. Only the NRA would lobby for this one.

Reel Fishing/Wild

Red Fishing Wild focuses the camera switches to an intently on capturing the underwheiming 3D underwijder almost Zen-like essence of view in which neither the envifishing itself with a few arcade. ronment nor any of the 24 fish

elements thrown in. And for the most part, it succeeds. The atmosphere is excellent with each of the H locations - ranging from a Japanese mountain stream to the piranha-infested Amazon - beautifully depicted by a photorealistic, looping RMV. A

lack of any user interface whatsoever actually adds to the immersion, and the minimalist music for each location rounds When there are fish nearbo



III The above ments are all FHV, so th

this does a better job of recreating the true feel of fishing we've played. - Eric Bratcher

hook, the analog stick must be used to guide your pole. Still, NextGen★★★☆☆

species' models are particularly

striking. The fish are both plen-

tiful and hungry however and

once booled, they fight very

realistically responding to rod

play almost exactly as real fish

do. Sadily while moving Segals

fishing controller will set the

Bottom Line: At full price, we'd throw this one back, but Reel Fishing actually feels a lot like real fishing. For \$20, it's definitely a keeper,

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DX Extract is



Red Faction

Released on PS2 several months ago, Red Faction proved to be one of the better first-person shooters for that console, it was hindered only by the bugaboo that seems endemic to shooters on console: unweldy gyoud control. So we were excited to test out the PC version, with its native mouse and keyboard support. The results are both oute nice, and slightly lacking.

To begin with, this is a solid and enjoyable experience. The wellintegrated storvine places you in the role of an oppressed miner on Mars who spontaneously joins a rebellion in the opening seconds of the game from there, you're on a mission to support the organized resistance and bring down your evil composite querionis The main problems here are

mostly due to Red Faction's console roots. The graphics aren't as sophisticated as a PC audience expects from a brand-new FPS. The



The railgun lets you shoot through walls. How cool is th

textures are smole, and the polygon count is thewise modest. On the other hand, it has a nice variety of weapons and manages a. few innovations — the most notable being destructible walls

In fact, the only serious knock you can make against it is that (tronically) having been designed primarily with the notoriously problematic joypad control in mind, the gameplay is a lot less challengine when attacked with a mouse and keyboard. It's still quite a kick, but any PC FPS vetorals will likely breeze through. - Jeff Lundrigon

NextGen ★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: Red Faction on PC is well worth playing for its engaging storyline and varied gameplay, but as a PC title, it's enjoyable without being especially notable.

Ultimate Ride

■ Platform: PC ■ Publisher Disney In This milercoaster construction same nearly lives up to its ambitious morekes. There are two styles of pize Imprineer mode, which offers some 24 missions with mostly intriguing parameters constructing a coaster that lasts for two full minutes but uses no lift. chains, for instance; and "free form mode which removes all hullding restrictions. The physics are slightly loosened for effect, our very first coaster west nearly 200 miles an hour and pulled a crushing 35 Gs. Of course, every coaster can be ndden in first person as well.

All in all this is a fine package. There are three coaster types wooden, steel, and hanging - with varied visual themes and around 45 entertaining larger-than-life decorations, such as erupting volcanges and laser blasting spaceships. However, there are some annoving flaws. The dunky con-

Impressive overall visuals struction interface offers no way to



replace a section of track other than erasine and mbullding every single place that comes after it, making spontaneous adjustments a chore. Also, the game has been Intentionally underdeveloped, ostensibly to make it playable on the largest number of PCs. It's still pretty but a beefler engine with more demanding hardware requirements and longer devitime could have violded fewer crashes, a smoother framerate, and more

- Oric Bostobas

■ NextGen + + + ☆☆

Bottom Line: It's slightly under-ambitious, but this is one ride that you should definitely consider taking



Throne of **Darkness**

Group theory takes a hit

Sometimes, good ness, a Japanese themed spin on the Diablo #-dominated action-RPG onre. While the game features tons of smart ideas and sharp sprite-based graphics, it ultimately bles because the deve pers failed to realize that what makes Dioblo II work largels, are its ultra-stream lined gamepley and easy

Although it is cool in theory to control a party of of eight total), the logistics of the situation require you to spend that much more

time navigating submers. This disrupts the pace of the game dramatically con ently making you stop and items to the blacksmith change out characters, or swap weapons and gold. The extra characters also set the fine balance Dioblo il strikes with gets so cluttered it's hard to tell what's going on, much

- a self-sorting inventory system, for example - that less to get the guy you're directly controlling to attack

how the team really was committed to making more than just another knock-off. in the end, though, the pluses only just balance out

the enemy you're after

It's a shame, too,

because the core same is

tion values are very high

There are even a few smar

improvements over Diablo il

rly solid and the produc

- Bloke Fischer

ENextGen ★★★☆☆

Bottom Line: Fun but frustrating. Ultimately, the steep learning curve (formations? Don't even ask...) and increased micromanagement keep the game from being a "Diablo II killer."



With King Arthur dead, the Realms of Albíon, Midgard and Hibernía are

locked in a mortal struggle.

All three must protect their territory and

precious Relics from the enemy or risk being overrun.

- Built of myth and forgod from magic, Dark Age of Camelot is an immersive manifely multiplayer online role-playing game drawing on Arthurian legends. Norse methology and Celtic lore.
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 of Scandinavia Great Britain and Ireland, featuring medieval villages,
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 - Fight intelligent monsters, as well as enemy realm players, using a vost arrends of Weapon's, special combat moves, magic and siege engines to expand and hold onto your realms territory.
 - Quest with an intricate and extensive questing engine offering up countless adventures for both the new player and veteran alike.
- Build siege weapons armhor and other essential items via the game's recolutionary urske-skill system that features thousands of uniquely craftable items.

 The Ag. of Canada's economy even includes player bosiums.



www.darkageofcamelot.com













INCLUDES GUEST APPEARANCES BY: AALIYAH JAY-Z - LUDACRIS PETEY PABLO STATIC from PLAYA

stackground



tive Producers: Timbaland, Barry Hankerson, Jeme

ADVISORY TENTIAL FOITED VERSION ALSO TENTIALE

→ Letters

Mail hormones

Today I discovered that my PS2 has decided to no longer play any DVD games or movies. After much troubleshooting (during which I discovered that audio CDs, PSX games, and non-DVD PS2 games all still work) I called the folks at Sony to see what they could do for me. Since I bought this machine on the day of its release (after a long and uncomfortable night on a cold ine sidewalk) the warranty had ired, so I didn't expect to get the box fixed for free, What I also didn't expect was to be charged \$119, plus shipping, plus a possible mystery charge for parts not covered by this flat repair rate - all for a problem that just

appeared out of nowhere, and

that was clearly not caused by anything other than normal use. Is 10 and a half months the expected life of a \$300 P52? Anyway, I did some research on the web, and to and behold, I found dozens of people with the same problem as mine. Take a

found dozens of people with the same problem as mine. Take a look at the forums at Videogamerepair.com and Gamer.Xtreme.com, especially the threads mentioning "Read Errors" and other similar posts. One user stated that the problem appeared only a couple

One user stated that the problem appeared only a couple months after buying the PS2, so they had it repaired for free, but several months later it happened again! The person I spoke to at Sony claimed to have never heard of anything like this. I have no intention of paying to get this fixed. If Sony wants to pretend that this problem doesn't exist, then I can pretend that they don't exist and see how Microsoft treats their loyal customers.

Tony Taylor Via email

We've been hearing similar stories for about this for months now, but as yet haven't gotten any response from Sory on the subject, officially or otherwise. We're not holding our breath either You may recall how years ago, when it slowly became clear that the original PlayStation was having bad overheating and lock-up problems, Sony pretty much kept mum about that too. We with we

could offer something more

concrete than caveat emptor

all we can do.

but at the moment that's about

Mode you by chance peruse those lettockets years and year list of "25 Rower Players" in NG (801) To wh't past achievements. Subjerg the industry_creative talent. new directions. "Where by God does some suit from Wal-Mart Condical with said criterion! At best this Rotarian stoage is some girlled stock boyl furing at the talent this capitalism byproduct sourced to make this list.

taient this capitalism typroduct usurped to mule this file. I do realize that given Mr. Connolly's helm at America's too progressor, his personal rancor "perhaps towards violence, the digital sesthetic, etc." could affice product placement. This I understand perfectly well. But why taunt the good people in the world at large with such drivel endomic to these United States! A lipaness politician who advocates true freedom of speech would have been an upfiffing piece. Why not him! Or her.

Daniel Yaffe

Via email

After reading the "25 Power Players" article in the journalists at Mexit
Generation do not know a thing
about the videogame inclusive,
including the videogame inclusive,
people responsible for the world
wide billion dollar game inclusive,
are given only the number three
and number two spots on your
set You know. Negren Whyamodo
in the business, and effected
in the business, and effected
rymanich, the rame who aggreslavly brought the industry to
America's Yamach's one of the
most efficient most in the
Missand of the control of the
most efficient most in the
Missand of the control of the
Missand of the most creative.

issue 10/01, I have decided that

You gave the number-one spot on your list to - I'm sorry, what was that guy's name? Oh, that's right, Ken Kutaragi. Who the hell is he? What did he do? Oh, he is the father of PlayStation and PS2. Big deal. That makes him the most power rful man in the industry? There wouldn't be a tion if there weren't a tendo. You call Kutarasi a brilliant engineer. Where are his franchises like Mario, Zeldo, Donkey Kong, Pokémon, Morio Kort, and many others? Sony may have sold more systems in recent wears than Nintendo, but no one, and I mean no one, can make the quality games and consoles that Nintendo brings to us. Tell Mc Kutaragi he's lucky Nintendo created an industry for him to work in. He may be good, but he

Greg Finelli

This is just scratching the surface of the response to our "SI Power Rispers" feature Carl docest's even include those from company reps who fee their own EGO or head of design deserved a spot instead of someone elso. We don't feel any particular need to reply directly. It's obtained that their of your own personal opinions, as we have ours. We explained our rationale sufficiently in the first testing their control of the second of their control of their contro

LINK, WE HARDLY KNEW YA

I was receipt jurified the internet and i came upon pictures of The Legender of Zeido for Camericlus. Where I list is some pictures of pictures are used to the control of the control of the pictures are used to the control of the control of the pictures are used to the control of the control of the thin a supercost desperters. A firsted and were thinking about buying CamericList, but once we saw how horrible the new Linking looks, we decided not to get the system. Why has Niteroid taken such a cool-looking character and changed finit into tomting to write dooling! Released Gestation Released Gestation Released Gestations.

Via emai

While we take a bit of umbrage at your pelorative comparison most of us here happen to think the Powerpoff Gifes are pretty cool — we do pympathize. As we reported last month, luck's new look event over with a bit of a hush among Western gamers and game Journalists when the character was unveiled at Militerato Spaceword 2001. As always, however, we esserve Judgment until we actually see how the game plays:



is not the best.

KUTARAGI AND THE WRONG TREE

I had to laugh when I read Ken Kutaragi's interview in "25 Power Players" (NG 10/01): "I think 3DO was a much, much

nicer platform than Xbox." Sure you do, Mr. Number-One Power Player. His reasoning More games. Ha! When Sony launched the original PlayStation the credo was "quality over quantity," was it not? Now his story has changed to take credibility from Xbox. I feel his voluntary acknowledgement of Xbox shows a bit of trepidation on his

part, if not Sony's part. I do want to pay homage to Kutaragi for his ingenious designs and powerful consoles. He is obviously a man to be llion PlayStations later. That number alone is revered, 85 mi

simply staggering to me. However, his statement only inspires me even more to see just what Xbox can do in my living room.

Kutaragi-san's 3DO quote provoked quite a lot of reaction and response, most of it in the vein of Mr. Shimon above. As we are not mind readers, we won't dissemble or guess as to his reasons for making such a seemingly bizarre statement, but feel free to discuss it among yourselves.

to go over things again would uply be repeating ourselves. We print the above purely in the interest of letting some of our readers share their opinions with the rest.

Why is it necessary to run a ment on 16-page advertises Xbox and the *Official Xbox Magazine" in your magazine this somewhat a conflict of ne? ism't interest? I find this disturbing since I consider Next Gen as "objective, yet brutally honest" when it comes to games and the oles they play on.

Don't get me wrong. As a 25year-old PS2 owner, I'm way too old to have fanboy arguments about which is the better system. If Xbox has a killer app, I'll be in line like the rest of 'em come November to purchase one. It's just annoying to look for some readable content when I have to flip through 16 pages of Xbox propaganda.

As you may have noticed Official Xbox Magazine is being published by Next Gen's parent company, Imagine. As such, several Imagine magazines that month ran that 16-page OXM ad. it had nothing to do with our editorial policies; Next Gen editors in no way contributed to its content; and it certainly hasn't changed our com to balanced reporting. We're

every bit as "objective, yet brutally honest" now as we always have been. We're sorry you found it "annoying," but honestly, it wasn't up to us.

First off, I really loved the Deod or Alive 3 cover story. I am so amazed at the graphics in DOA3. The women ters are incredibly detailed, and that's not to mention the ful scenery that is used in each stage. The characters seem very realistic, and I'm really looking forward to meeting the new Hitomi and checking out her karate moves, I was knocked out by the ice cavern graphics, and Christie, our vely British assassin, never looked better! Wow!

Via email

On the other hand:

I was excited to see that DOA3 was your cover story but after reading through the article I was disappointed. You cribed the game's graphics in oth, the detailed character is it good? models, and the great, interactive backgrounds. You say that they are "incorporating new concepts" and "continuing to refine the combat system." But then you fall to elaborate. The closest you come is telling us of a "spinesnapping new special attack.* You close the article by declaring this game an undenlable killer

answers to many of the good questions you pose. But yes, we were able to play a demo version featuring several charactors. And as we've since seen have more answers for you. The characters move very efficiently in 3D. The reversal system now includes multiple counters per character. Modes of play include Survival, and an Improved Tag mode. Throwing opponents into damage. On the hardware side. the hard drive is used to eliminate load times. Online plans are being made for future versions but won't make the U.S. launch

III just goes to show that one p with being at the top is worry! about how to stay there

app, but you barely mentioned: ngle gameplay element in four s of text! In fact, you describe Virtuo Fighter 3 and the first DOA in more detailed

gameplay terms than this game. This article is way below par for your magazine. It makes it appear that you think your readers are only interested in the graphical details. Did you actually play the game? If so, can you move efficiently in 3D? How has the reversal system changed? hat gameplay modes are there? Is there a Tag feature? How do the more open arenas affect cor-noring someone? Do they affect ment? Do any of the stages help or hinder certain styles of fighting? On the hardware side, what use is made of Xbox's hard Paul Dale Roberts drive? Are there online plans?

Don't you think your readers would like these and other questions answered instead of your description of graphics we can see for ourselves? I for one am not willing to believe this is a "killer app" just because you think it's pretty. I know it's pretty.

Leon Dexter

At the time the article was written, there weren't concrete

we may have unduly overzed the grap e record, what we have played and what we've seen since is very, very good indeed. I would guess that some people in your organization might feel your work seems what "non-essential" with the recent horrific events. But please continue to provide us with the top-notch coverage we've come to rely on from Next Gen. My wife and five kids have been gathering around the set to watch scenes of destruction and mourning instead of hell hounds and green herbs, but when we do take up our joysticks again we'll appreciate how you help us find the gems and avoid the dreck. Nick D'0 Via email

rsus. Team Battle, Sto

3D objects in the arena does

sing more than a bit wowed by

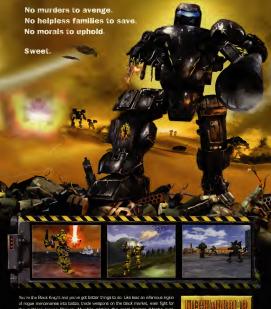
DOA3's sheer, knockout beauty,

In all the years that we have been writing Next Gen, this is perhaps the most heartwarming of the thousands of letters we've received. The entire Next Gen staff thanks you so very much for your support. It sounds as though you and your family of five children have nd comfort in each ot ing this time of tragedy, and ring that you even found me time to share kind words with us, we're sure they couldn't

Thank you again, sincerely, from all of us

Next Generation Letters. 150 North Hill Dr., Brisbane, CA 94005. Email us: ngonline@imaginemedia.com Note: email is vastly, vastly preferred

Via Email















Check It Out!

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从DDICT

Ultimate Surf Action. Drop into 20 of the world's sweetest breaks with 13 of the world's hottest surfers. From Teahupoo to Pipeline to Huntington, use the moves that made guys like Taj Burrow, Andy Irons and Shane Dorian famous to pull off massive airs, blazing tailslides and hundreds of other mind-numbing tricks. Immerse yourself in an endless set of waves that look and feel like the real thing. And remember to save your best stuff for the photographers in-game cover of TransWorld SURE





→ Retroview

December 1992

Shareware gains respect - the oldfashioned way

Near the end of 1992, the console industry was a two-horse race, with Sega's Genesis edging out Nintendo's SNES (thanks to a certain bluefurred, fleet-footed mascot). Despite this, one of the most far-reaching developments of the year occurred in the PC or, it was, of course, the release of Id Software's original shareware masterpiece.

Wolfenstein 3-D. The result of the combined effort of designer John Romero and programmer John Carmack, Wolfenstein 3-D is easily among the most successful and influential games of all time. It basically created the first-person shooter genre, and in a broader sense, it did more to further the notion of 3D gaming than any other



title before or since, it also granted tremendous validation to the concept of shareware. which was largely considered an outlet for shabby, amateur-

quality games at the time. And of course, the tremendous success of the game and its sub sequent full release version enabled id to continue developing - which it did, going on to produce Doom, Doom II, and the Quoke series.



What we were playing

Everybody was kung-fu fighting

STREET FIGHTER II:

FATAL FURY 2

MORTAL KOMBAT

KING OF THE MONSTERS 2 STREETS OF RAGE 2

■ Platform: Genesis ■ Publisher: Sega

lboard's No

15 years I'm Too Sexy or# 25 End of the Road How Do You Talk to An Angel

...and in the real world = 180 Offe-millionth computer connects to the internet, and audio and video are carried online for the first time, via the MBONE (Multicast Backbone), a primitive conferencing network.

■ 172 nations attend the Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro, in an effort to address environmental concerns such as the greenhouse effect and decreasing blodiversity on a global level.

■ Notable passings: Issac Asimov — author, Lawrence Welk — bandleader, Sam Kinkon — consedian.

■ Microsoft ships Windows 3.1, selling one million copies in the first 50 days of the title's release. Compact discs surpass cassette tapes as the preferred medium for recorded

■ Eric Clapton dominates the Grammy Awards. His Unplugged album takes Album of the Year and Best Rock Yocal Performance by a Hále, and the single "Tears in Heaven" wins Record of the Year, Song of the Year, and Best Pop Yocal

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Imagine Media, Inc.

Arr years

Description of Control Control

Application Control

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The property of the control of the c



BackwardsCompatib

entire Next Gen staff's collective asses. Pare 4i. Crash? Why yes, it has Page 100. So, you don't think there's any way Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 could get eny better? You're wrong — read this. Page 94. There's an old saving that says if you put 100 monkeys in a room with 100 typewriters, one of them will eventually write a Shakespearian play. But what happens if you give them firearms? Page 52. Defender, Donkey Kong, Zoxxon, Centipede, and Poc-Mon. If you can identify the game we left out, you are truly herdcore. Page 2i. A console FPS ported to PC you don't see that everyday Page IIS. What'l You don't think thet milking cows, feeding chickens, and picking tometoes is suitable gameplay? Hey, at least you don't need to shovel anything, if you know what we mean Page 105, Sure, both of these guys can breathe underwater. But only one of them looks strangely like Meg Ryan. Page 25. Don't mess with lone Makunouchi. Page 108. Even if you've beaten the original Resident Evil a hundred times (freak), you've never seen it like this. Page 28. One keeper, and one to let go - you won't believe which is which Page 112. Despite what you might think, "volumetric grass" isn't really any louder than regular grass. Page 96. Why just drive to the mell when you can drive all the way through the mell! Page 46. The Fost and the Furious indeed - we heard Leo kicked Vin Diesel's arse at Wove Roce: Blue Storm, Page 15. Every single thing you need to know about GameCube, before you buy. Pare 76, Yes, you have to hit this baby with its own bouncy ball to proceed through the game. Could this be the most politically incorrect Nintendo title ever? Page 82. The two most important pages we've printed this year - and no, it isn't Tom's letter of resignetion. Page 88.

NextMonth They're here!



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